



The Union Defender

The Newsletter of Phelps Camp No. 66,
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



July 2017

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE JUNE MEETING?

Members discussed several upcoming events, including the Vicksburg Monument rededication, the Mountain Grove "Last Soldier" marker dedication, the Pea Ridge staff ride, and the Wilson's Creek battle anniversary program.

WILSON'S CREEK BATTLE ANNIVERSARY CEREMONY

The 156th anniversary of the Battle of Wilson's Creek will be commemorated on Thursday, August 10 at 10 a.m. in front of the Visitor Center. The guest speaker will be Dr. Mary Abroe, board member of the Civil War Trust. The program will last approximately 90 minutes.



NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Tuesday, September 5 at 7 p.m. at the Wilson's Creek National Battlefield Visitor Center.

PEA RIDGE STAFF RIDE

Camp member Todd Wilkinson has offered to lead a military staff ride of Pea Ridge National Military Park for members of Phelps Camp. Todd routinely conducts staff rides at Pea Ridge for ROTC students.

A military staff ride combines the principles of war with the story of the battle, using historical accounts to examine why commanders made the decisions they did on the field of battle.

We will meet at the Pea Ridge Visitor Center on Sunday, September 17 at 8:30 a.m. We will pay our entrance fees and start with the Visitor Center exhibits, then move on to the Tour Road. We will be finished by 1 p.m.

If you are interested and have not contacted Jeff Patrick, please do so by e-mail (tam1rn@juno.com) or by phone (417) 350-7192.

“LAST SOLDIER” MARKER DEDICATION FOR JAMES COLUMBUS CLOUSE

On Saturday, May 13, members of Phelps Camp dedicated its first “Last Soldier” marker in Hillcrest Cemetery in Mountain Grove, Missouri.

The marker honors James Columbus Close, the last surviving Union Civil War veteran in Wright County. He died in 1946 at the age of 100. Clouse served in the 5th Tennessee Infantry (U.S.), a regiment that saw action in the Western Theater.

Members have discussed placing the next “Last Soldier” marker in Jasper County, Missouri.

PHELPS CAMP REPRESENTED AT S.A.R. NATIONAL CEMETERY PROGRAM

Members Ron McCall and John Rutherford represented the camp at a special ceremony on Saturday, May 27 at the Springfield National Cemetery. The ceremony, conducted by the local chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, honored Revolutionary War veteran William Freeman and Civil War Medal of Honor recipient Orion Howe. Thank you Ron and John for attending and honoring Orion Howe, a 14-year old drummer boy in the 55th Illinois Infantry who was severely wounded at Vicksburg and braved enemy fire to report to General Sherman that his regiment was out of ammunition.

VICKSBURG MISSOURI MONUMENT REDEDICATION

On May 27, members of the Missouri Department, SUVCW rededicated the newly-restored Missouri Monument at Vicksburg National Military Park. Camp member Herb Jackson represented Phelps Camp at the event. Our thanks to Herb for attending this important event.

Here are some excerpts from *The Vicksburg Post* coverage:

“VNMP historian Scott Babinowich said the rededication was the result of collaboration between Donald Palmer Jr., past commander in chief for the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Palmer talked to park Superintendent Bill Justice about restoring the monument and holding a ceremony.

Palmer said Justice told him the monument’s repair was one of the park’s high profile projects and was able to get funding from the National Park Service. Palmer recalled the original dedication ceremony took place as the United States was preparing to enter World War I.

‘Reconciliation was on people’s minds at a time when boys from the north and boys from the south were being mobilized to fight in Europe,’ he said, adding the American Flag draped over the monument recalled the reconciliation that came during the original dedication 100 years ago.”

