

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR



GENERAL JAMES J. BYRNE CAMP 1, FORT WORTH, TEXAS

DEPARTMENT OF TEXAS WITH LOUISIANA

MAY 2022 NEWSLETTER



CAMP COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

24 May 2022

Brothers!

This newsletter will be brief this month, as I am still recovering from cervical spine decompression and fusion surgery, albeit I am much improved from this time last month.

For those of you who attended the Department Encampment in person, thank you for representing Camp #1 with your presence. I was able to attend via Zoom, but it simply is not the same as being there in person. Congratulations to new Department Commander Michael Lance!

The next Camp event is the Memorial Day ceremony at Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth. Please plan to attend this event if at all possible. The ceremony will begin on Memorial Day, 30 May 2022, at 1000 hours, so please plan to be there between 0900 and 0930. Unfortunately, due to a decision by the national Boy Scouts of America executive council, the cannons will no longer be available. There is currently some discussion on selling them, but it sounds like national wants to render them incapable of being fired before they sell them. On the positive side, we will have a firing detail there to render the salute.

Finally, Brother Wilbur posted a message a couple of weeks ago regarding the grave of the last Union veteran in Denton County. My wife Carol graciously drove me up to Denton, and we visited the IOOF cemetery and located the grave (it is located in the southwest corner of the cemetery, next to Eagle drive). I was pleased to see that a GAR marker was present; unfortunately, I forgot to bring a flag from my stash but will return and add it in the near future.



Our next meeting will be via Zoom, or possibly even a hybrid meeting with facilities available at the Texas Civil War Museum in Fort Worth if we can work out the details in time. Meeting date is 21 June 2022, and the time will be 1900 hours. I look forward to seeing everyone there. Again, if you cannot make the Tuesday meeting, PLEASE let us know if another day/time would work for you. In the absence of a preference, we will continue with the Tuesday evening meetings on the third Tuesday of each month.

In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,



Paul L. Kendall. Ph.D.

Commander
Camp #1, General James J. Byrne
Department of Texas and Louisiana
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War



General James J. Byrne Camp No. 1

May 17, 2022

Meeting Minutes

The Camp's meeting took place on-line, via Zoom.

The meeting was opened by Camp Commander Paul Kendall at 7:33 p.m. with six members and one visitor, Department Signals Officer and our Zoom host Brother John Vander Meulen, in attendance.

Our upcoming Memorial Day ceremony to be held in Oakwood Cemetery on Monday, May 30, 2022 beginning at 10:00 a.m. was discussed. CC Kendall stated that he had not heard back from Brother Brian Glass regarding the availability of the cannons for the ceremony. Past Camp Commander Timothy Phillips suggested contacting Brother Beau Moore regarding this. There has been no word on press participation at our Memorial Day ceremony, but that is not unusual.

CC Kendall said that he might be able to get some musket men for a salute detail, and PCC Phillips said that he would be there to sound Taps.

It was reported that Department Commander "Bo" Vets appreciates that Camp 1 is still moving forward.

Junior Vice Commander Todd Wilber stated that there had been some activity with graves registration, and that he had registered one new grave. He will forward what he did to the Department Graves Registration Officer. It was noted that the Department GRO has a database of over 6,000 registered Union veteran's graves in Texas and Louisiana.

The Texas Civil War Museum is still happy to let us hold meetings there. CC Kendall will go over there sometime next month to look at the room and check the arrangements.

CC Kendall will begin calling Camp members individually about the Camp's monthly meetings.

There was some discussion regarding how we are currently initiating new Camp members. Brother Vander Meulen noted that Camp 18 has recorded an initiation ceremony they did in January, and that recording has been posted in the Members Section of the Department Facebook group for members to see.

A question was raised about holding another recruiting drive around July 4, as was done last year. The one held then attracted some interest and interactions with a number of visitors to the Texas Civil War Museum, though it does not appear to have led to new members joining the Camp. CC Kendall will coordinate that with the Museum.

We also need to be looking forward to our annual ceremony at the grave of our namesake, General James J. Byrne, in November.

Brother Vander Meulen noted that the Department will install the new Department Junior Vice Commander, and Camp 18 will initiate two new members, on June 4 via Zoom. He will send out the Zoom link for members of the other Camps to attend.

There being no further business, Commander Kendall closed the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

David B. Appleton

Secretary / Treasurer

General James J. Byrne Camp No. 1

Department of Texas with Louisiana

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IMPORTANT CIVIL WAR DATE:

The Battle of the Wilderness was fought on May 5–7, 1864, during the War of the Rebellion. It was the first battle of Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Virginia Overland Campaign against General Robert E. Lee and the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. The fighting occurred in a wooded area near Locust Grove, Virginia, about 20 miles west of Fredericksburg. Both armies suffered heavy casualties, nearly 29,000 in total, a harbinger of a war of attrition by Grant against Lee's army and, eventually, the Confederate capital, Richmond, Virginia. The battle was tactically inconclusive, as Grant disengaged and continued his offensive.

Grant attempted to move quickly through the dense underbrush of the Wilderness of Spotsylvania, but Lee launched two of his corps on parallel roads to intercept him. On the morning of May 5, the Union V Corps under Major General Gouverneur K. Warren attacked the Confederate Second Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Richard S. Ewell, on the Orange Turnpike. That afternoon the Third Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General A. P. Hill, encountered Brigadier General George W. Getty's division (VI Corps) and Major General Winfield S. Hancock's II Corps on the Orange Plank Road. Fighting, which ended for the evening because of darkness, was fierce but inconclusive as both sides attempted to maneuver in the dense woods.

At dawn on May 6, Hancock attacked along the Plank Road, driving Hill's Corps back in confusion, but the First Corps of Lieutenant General James Longstreet arrived in time to prevent the collapse of the Confederate right flank. Longstreet followed up with a surprise flanking attack from an unfinished railroad bed that drove Hancock's men back, but the momentum was lost when Longstreet was wounded by his own men. An evening attack by Brigadier General John B. Gordon against the Union right flank caused consternation at the Union headquarters, but the lines stabilized and fighting ceased. On May 7, Grant disengaged and moved to the southeast, intending to leave the Wilderness to interpose his army between Lee and Richmond, leading to the Battle of Todd's Tavern and Battle of Spotsylvania Court House.

The Battle of the Wilderness had no obvious winner, and neither side was driven from the battlefield. The National Park Service calls the battle "indecisive". One historian says that Lee won a victory because he fought Grant to a standoff, but he also adds that the battle was a failure for the Confederacy because it was unable to maintain the initiative and Lee's offensive capacity was eliminated. A major point discussed by historians is that after the battle, Grant did not retreat north across the nearest river—like other leaders earlier in the war. Instead, the Union army continued south presenting a threat to Lee's army and the Confederate capital city of Richmond. This was the first time in a Virginia campaign that the Army of the Potomac continued on the offensive after an initial battle, and morale was boosted to the point that the Union soldiers sang as they marched south. Sherman called this movement "the grandest act of [Grant's] life", and added that he now felt "that the rebellion will be crushed".

Grant's plan for Meade's Army of the Potomac was to move south to confront Lee's army between the Union and Confederate capital cities, Washington and Richmond. At the same time, General Benjamin Butler's Army of the James would approach Richmond, Petersburg, and Lee from the southeast near the James River. Major General Franz Sigel's Army of the Shenandoah

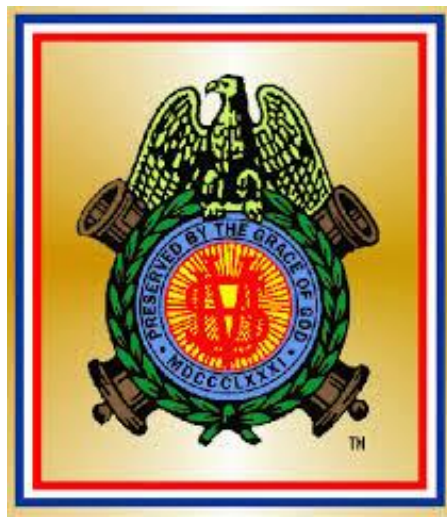
would move through the Shenandoah Valley and destroy the rail line, agricultural infrastructure, and granaries used to feed the Confederate armies. Brigadier Generals George Crook and William W. Averell would attack the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad, and salt and lead mines, in western Virginia before moving east to join Sigel. Sherman would attack Georgia with the similar goal of destroying rail line, resources, and infrastructure used to equip and feed the Confederate armies.

Grant's campaign objective of the destruction of Lee's army coincided with the preferences of both Lincoln and his military chief of staff, Henry Halleck. Grant instructed Meade, "Lee's army will be your objective point. Wherever Lee goes, there you will go also." Although he hoped for a quick, decisive battle, Grant was prepared to fight a war of attrition. Both the Union and Confederate casualties could be high, but the Union had greater resources to replace lost soldiers and equipment. By May 2, Grant had four corps positioned to begin Meade's portion of Grant's plan against Lee's army. Three of the corps, plus cavalry, comprised Meade's Army of the Potomac. A fourth corps, reporting directly to Grant, added additional firepower. The Rapidan River divided the two foes. A few days later, Grant and Meade would cross the river and begin what became known as the Overland Campaign, and the Battle of the Wilderness was its first battle.



Memorial Day in Fort Worth, Texas at Oakwood Cemetery

The Camp participated in a Memorial Day event at the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Monument in Oakwood Cemetery in Fort Worth.



2022 Department Encampment in Jefferson, Texas

The Camp participated in the 2022 Department of Texas and Louisiana Encampment in Jefferson, Texas on May 7. Brothers Mark Parkison, Todd Wilber and Butch Durham attended in person and several brothers were on the zoom meeting.





CAMP PATRIOTIC INSTRUCTION:

Sovereign Ruler of the World, and Father of men, we beseech thee, in this time of civil war and rebellion, to remember in thy mercy, the people and Government of the United States. Strengthen in us the love of righteousness. May we truly repent of our national sins; may we be enabled, by thy mighty power to suppress the present civil war and rebellion that threaten to destroy our Union, and liberties. Bless our Rulers and give them wisdom to guide us safely through our perils. Bless our righteous arms and make them efficient for the preservation of the nation. Remove, O God, the causes of the present unhappy strife. May we establish our government forever, on the inalienable rights of mankind.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity and
Loyalty. Brother Mark Parkison,
Patriotic Instructor

