The Commander’s Corner

Thomas J. Key Camp Commander, Jim Thornton

It’s the “Return of the Carpetbaggers”. Not necessarily those of the political kind, but those unscrupulous opportunists who are taking financial advantage of the honest, hardworking Southerners and Confederates trying to protect and preserve their property, possessions, and way of life.

In the late 1860’s to early 1870’s the carpetbaggers were businessmen who purchased or leased plantations. They became wealthy landowners, hiring freedmen and white Southerners to do the labor through the development of sharecropping. Carpetbaggers also established banks and retail businesses, issuing monies and goods under high-interest loan programs. They tended to be well educated and middle class in origin. These con-artists were taking advantage of the former citizens of the Confederate States who were in a deep depression over the loss of their way of life and the aggressive invasion of their country. The carpetbaggers of the post-war era were taking advantage of an opportunity to line their pockets.

Today, I predict we are on the verge of seeing a return of the carpetbaggers. I am sure there are some already out there. These will be the 21st Century Carpetbaggers of the technology age. These con-artists will be preying on the Southerners and Confederates who are not losing their land, but rather, losing their monuments, memorials, parks, landmarks, and namesakes. These 21st Century Carpetbaggers will not be setting up brick-and-mortar banks or businesses. They will be establishing websites, blogs, Facebook pages, and other social media sites to take advantage of those wishing to financially assist in the preservation of our monuments, parks, etc.

I urge caution to all of us planning to make donations to organizations claiming to be “working to preserve and protect Confederate monuments, parks, memorials, etc.” Do not simply click the donate button on a “change.org” page or a “GoFundMe” page claiming to be a charity organization for Confederate preservation. It is simply too easy for someone with technological skill to set up a “look alike” webpage and scam emotionally compromised people out of thousands of dollars. The differences between a legitimate website and a copycat scam website are sometimes so miniscule, the average eye cannot tell the difference. It can be as simple as one letter not being capitalized in the header.
I advise any of you desiring to financially assist in the preservation efforts, to only make your donations through SCV Headquarters, State Division Headquarters, or specific camps. I would suggest avoiding any and all so-called Confederate or monument preservation funds set up through the various websites such as “change.org” or “GoFundMe pages”. Not only would you lose the money you thought you donated, but you would also be providing your credit card or bank info to those unscrupulous individuals.

Just as the post-war carpetbaggers did, the 21st Century Carpetbaggers are also taking advantage of the current Southern and Confederate frame of mind over our situation. Now, they are using technology.

Deo Vindice!

Your Commander, Jim Thornton

The Telegraph Key

The Telegraph Key is a newsletter published for the Major Thomas Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotic, historical, and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers and are not necessarily a statement of the views of the SCV, the Kansas Division, the Kansas Brigades, nor any other camp. Comments and articles are solicited.

Key Camp Website Resources

Key Camp: www.MajorKey1920ksscv.org
SCV National: www.SCV.org
Kansas Division: http://www.ksscv.org/

Key Camp Officers

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMANDER</th>
<th>1ST LT. COMMANDER</th>
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<td>Jim Thornton</td>
<td>John Weir</td>
<td>Scott Lalumondier</td>
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<th>ADJUTANT</th>
<th>CHAPLAIN</th>
<th>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve Crawford</td>
<td>Walter Schley</td>
<td>Garrett Hayden</td>
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The Key Camp will meet on Thursday, March 1st, at Zarda Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivira in Lenexa, Kansas at 6 p.m. for dinner and conversation, with the official meeting at 7 p.m.

Our featured speaker for the evening will be Mr. Steve Maddox from Joplin, MO. He will be giving us a presentation on his ancestors who were Confederate Guerilla fighters in the area.

Join us for camaraderie, dinner, and education. As always, your wife or significant other is welcome.

Don’t forget to bring a prospective recruit!
Greetings from Missouri,

Cathy Goetsch, the Captain, and I had a wonderful time. We so enjoyed being a part of your Lee-Jackson Dinner.

Thanks again for my bullet plaque. I will find a place for it in the Capt's Room. I think I might put the decanter I bought at your auction in his room too.

A gentleman was asking me about Elmer Keith and I didn't catch his name. I would like to get a hold of him and let him know that Elmer's house is still standing near Hardin. Is there a way to put the word out and find out who it was?

On our ride home out of Kansas, Cathy and I decided we shall return and join in on your meetings again.

Thank you to everyone that made us feel welcome.

I hope you can plan a day trip and come visit us when the spring thaw hits.

Thanks,
Linda Emley
Museum Manager

Ray County Museum
901 W. Royle St.
Richmond, Mo. 64085

Phone 816-776-2305
FACEBOOK : Ray County Museum & Genealogical Library
A MESSAGE TO THE CAMP FROM PAUL ALLEN
By Paul Allen

I was stunned and speechless to be presented with the Key's Battery Award for faithful service to the Camp. Betty was shocked to be recognized with the Ladies Appreciation Award. We feel unqualified to be so honored. Although my participation in Camp activities pales in comparison to that of others, what efforts I render are inspired by the faithfulness of my fellow compatriots, especially Commander Emeritus "Spike" Speicher, Merle Leech, Commander Jim Thornton, Mike Smith, 2nd Lt. Commander Scott Lalumondier and Jack Poynter.
On Saturday, January 27, The Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920 held their 17th Annual Lee-Jackson Banquet at the Abdallah Shrine Temple. With a turnout of around 40 in total attendance, it was a festive evening with great food, an enlightening program, and a well-organized auction. Following the opening ceremonies and opening remarks by Commander Jim Thornton on the relationship between General Robert E. Lee and General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, traditional toasts were made by several compatriots to the heroes of the Confederacy and to the ladies present. A catered steak dinner was then served. Hy-Vee catered the dinner again this year, and as in years past, grilled the steaks on site for us! Also served were twice-baked potatoes, grilled corn on the cob, tossed salad, sour-dough dinner rolls, and coffee. It was quite a feast! As they have done for us the last couple of years, the Abdallah Shrine provided us with an open bar and bartender, with the bar proceeds applied to our facility rental fee. The Key Camp compatriots consumed sufficient beverages to knock our rental fee down to $25!

After dinner, the camp officers cut and served the Lee and Jackson birthday cake provided by Price Chopper. The cake was so delicious and moist, many compatriots took a second piece this year!

Following dinner, the Key Camp paid tribute to a husband and wife team. The camp recognized and honored Compatriot Paul D. Allen for his contributions to the camp by presenting him the Key’s Battery Award for 2017. And they also recognized and expressed gratitude to his wife, Betty Allen, with the Sons of Confederate Veterans Ladies Appreciation Medal for her assistance and advice during the creation of the camp’s educational artifact and weapons collection.

The evening’s program was a presentation by Linda Emley, curator and museum manager of the Ray County Historical Museum. She provided us with a discussion of the life of Captain William “Bloody Bill” Anderson and his influence on the region, focusing on Ray County. It was quite the interactive program, with Linda taking and answering many questions during her presentation. She truly engaged the gathering during her talk.

As is camp custom at the banquet, following the program was the live auction with Auctioneer Extraordinaire Shane Smith serving as master-of-auction-ceremonies. Thanks to the amazing efforts of our auction committee, we were blessed with a wonderful collection of items for
sale. According to Adjutant Steve Crawford, the auction resulted in $1,055 being collected for the camp!
The evening’s events came to a close with the Ancestor Memorial Candlelight Ceremony, with the memorial
service address delivered by Compatriot Walt McKenzie. All those present offered a remembrance of a family
member or loved one who served in the military of the Confederate States or the United States in any conflict.
Following the singing of “Dixie”, the Key Camp Lee-Jackson Banquet 2018 came to an end.
For those interested, Commander Thornton has created an online photo album of the evening. All photos are
provided courtesy of multiple Key Camp compatriots.

You can access the photos at https://photos.app.goo.gl/IFhzFfmrJUw9bq0t2
KEY CAMP INVITED TO TAKE PART IN CIVIL WAR TRUST PARK DAY

The Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans has been invited to take part in the Civil War Trust 2018 Park Day on April 7. This is a day for organizations and volunteers to come to the Battlefields for a clean-up and maintenance work day. The Key Camp has received an invitation to join in with other groups and volunteers at Mine Creek Battlefield.

Since 1996, the Civil War Trust has sponsored Park Day, an annual hands-on preservation event to help Civil War — and now Revolutionary War & War of 1812 — battlefields and historic sites take on maintenance projects large and small. Activities are chosen by each participating site to meet their own particular needs and can range from raking leaves and hauling trash to painting signs and trail buildings.

Our assignment at Mine Creek Battlefield will be to walk the trails, checking for obstacles such as fallen tree limbs and to clean up any litter along the paths. Opportunities will also exist at the Visitor Center for any volunteers unable to hike the trails. Tami Neal, site director, will be attempting to arrange for a couple of ATV’s or Gators to assist those working the trails. The day will begin at 9:00am.

The Civil War Trust is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization devoted to the preservation of America’s hallowed battlegrounds. Although primarily focused on the protection of Civil War battlefields, the Trust also seeks to save the battlefields connected to the Revolutionary War and War of 1812. Through educational programs and heritage tourism initiatives, the Trust seeks to inform the public about the vital role these battlefields played in determining the course of our nation’s history.

The Civil War Trust sees these battlefields as outdoor classrooms, teaching young and old alike about the sacrifices made during our nation’s turbulent first century to secure the precious freedoms we enjoy today. They are the places where crucial chapters of the American story were written, where ordinary citizens — farmers, merchants and laborers — displayed extraordinary valor fighting for independence and freedom. Incredibly, the vast majority of these hallowed battlegrounds remain unprotected. History education is the foundation of good citizenship and a key ingredient in developing the leaders of tomorrow. Visiting America’s battlefields enables people to connect with our history, learning firsthand about the citizen-soldiers who helped forge a nation. The Civil War Trust seeks to preserve this history — not to promote a single point of view, but to provide a comprehensive set of perspectives from America’s first century.

So, come on down to Mine Creek Battlefield on Saturday, April 7, at 9:00am and join with others working to preserve our battlefield. Have fun interacting with other groups and individuals interested in preserving our history. And while we’re at it, we can do some good work and help maintain our part of the story.
The Key Camp is proud to take part in many perpetual service projects throughout the year.

Upcoming 2018 Events

Spring Work Day 2018 with The Civil War Trust; Mine Creek Battlefield
Saturday, April 7, 2018 at 9:00am
Mine Creek Battlefield

SCV Kansas Division Reunion and Convention
June 15-16
Topeka

SCV National Reunion
July 18-21
Franklin, Tennessee

The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.
— George Orwell