

# THE UNION INFORMER

Monthly Newsletter of the Indian Nations Camp No. 3

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

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Members of the Jeremiah Smith Camp No. 1, Dept. SVC Jeff Kennedy, Dept. Cdr. Craig McKinley, PDC Mark Edwards, Camp Cdr. Terry Handley, CinC Brian Pierson, and Dept. Sec. William Andrews, pose for a photo at the GAR Monument in Fairlawn Cemetery during their Remembrance Day ceremony on November 21.

(Photo by Jeff Kennedy)



## December Camp Meeting

Our meeting this month will be held on December 3, since our normal 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday for November interferes with the Thanksgiving holidays. Deferring to the spike in virus infections, **this will be a Zoom meeting**. Camp members will receive email instructions of how to join the meeting – quite simple. The Zoom meeting will begin at the usual camp meeting time of 6:30 p.m., and will last less than 40 minutes.

The November meeting is always moved to the first Thursday in December to avoid conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday. The program, which was scheduled to be given by Cdr. Rusk on the subject of John Brown, will be presented at a future meeting.

## October Camp Meeting

Present were: Mike McGraw; Mike Rusk; Mike Gates; Clint Anderson; Charlie Walker; Scott Preston; Michael Gambill; and Carl Fallen.

A slate of officers was presented at the camp meeting, with no other nominations made. A ballot was to be circulated to camp members to be voted before the next camp meeting.

Brother Michael Gambill presented an excellent and exuberant program entitled "The 1864 Presidential Election - Lincoln v. McClellan." As a history teacher and coach at Olive Public Schools in Drumright, Brother Gambill is practiced in this sort of thing, and we were the beneficiaries this time. He had prepared a multi-page handout, since we didn't have PowerPoint video capabilities in our meeting room. His subject was well researched and presented with enthusiasm. With a current presidential election to occur within a few days, this was a timely topic. Paralleling our upcoming election, Lincoln's advisers tried to persuade him to postpone the presidential election, but the president has no constitutional authority to change a presidential election. An interesting issue Mike pointed out was that Lincoln removed his VP, Hannibal Hamlin, to be replaced in favor of a southern War Democrat, Andrew Johnson, which had "massive implications later during Reconstruction."

Lincoln and Johnson were opposed by Democrat Party candidates Gen. McClellan and VP candidate, Ohio Representative George Pendleton, who later became known for the Pendleton Act. The act mandates that most positions in the U.S. government be awarded on the basis of merit instead of political patronage.

Three states were admitted to the Union during the war: Kansas, West Virginia, and Nevada, and they influenced the Electoral College vote count to help tip the vote in favor of Lincoln. Lincoln won 54% of the civilian vote (and 78% of the military vote) but got 212 electoral votes versus McClellan's 21.

Mike said that the 1864 election perhaps turned out to be one of the most racial presidential elections in the nation's history.

Sherman's capture of Atlanta was a significant event in Lincoln's re-election victory.

Similar to our election this year, voter suppression was an issue. "Many northern states did not allow Union soldiers to vote in 1864."

## Camp Business

A ballot was emailed to camp members to vote on the nominations made at the October camp meeting. While all the ballots have not been returned, a majority of them approved the candidates for office.

Commander	Clint Anderson
Senior Vice Cdr.	Joe Fears
Junior Vice Cdr.	Scott Preston
Treasurer	Carl Fallen
Secretary	No Candidate
Patriotic Instructor	Steven Tolbert (Volunteer)

Indian Nations Camp currently has 19 members in good standing.

We held out the hope that we could hold our annual Remembrance Day ceremony at the Rose Hill Cemetery, but with the COVID-19 infection rates spiking again, an informal poll was taken among the membership to get their opinion about the safety involved. The result was that the event was cancelled at the beginning of the week it was to occur. Brother Fears had already made preparations, but notified those taking part that it had been called off.



## Remembrance Day (From Wikipedia)

**Remembrance Day** (also known as **Poppy Day**) is a memorial day observed in Commonwealth of Nations member states since the end of the First World War to remember the members of their armed forces who have died in the line of duty. Following a tradition inaugurated by King George V in 1919, the day is also marked by war remembrances in many non-Commonwealth countries. Remembrance Day is observed on 11 November in most countries to recall the end of hostilities of World War I on that date in 1918. Hostilities formally ended "at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month", in accordance with the armistice signed by representatives of Germany and the Entente between 5:12 and 5:20 that morning. ("At the 11th hour" refers to the *passing* of the 11th hour, or 11:00 am.) The First World War officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919.

The memorial evolved out of Armistice Day, which continues to be marked on the same date. The initial Armistice Day was observed at Buckingham Palace, commencing with King George V hosting a "Banquet in Honour of the President of the French Republic" during the evening hours of 10 November 1919. The first official Armistice Day was subsequently held on the grounds of Buckingham Palace the following morning.

The red remembrance poppy has become a familiar emblem of Remembrance Day due to the poem "In Flanders Fields". These poppies bloomed across some of the worst battlefields of Flanders in World War I; their brilliant red colour became a symbol for the blood spilled in the war.

### **United States**

Veterans Day is observed in the United States on 11 November, and is both a federal holiday and a state holiday in all states. However, the function of the observance elsewhere is more closely matched by Memorial Day in May. In the United States, and some other allied nations, 11 November was formerly known as Armistice Day; in the United States it was given its new name in 1954 at the end of the Korean War to honor all veterans. Veterans Day is observed with memorial ceremonies, salutes at military cemeteries, and parades.

### **Remembrance Day Ceremony Cancelled amid COVID Concerns**

With COVID at a critical level in Tulsa County, and least one of our camp members having succumbed to the virus recently, Cdr. Rusk sought advice from the camp officers regarding possibly cancelling our Remembrance Day observance the following Saturday. This was a hard decision. Mike said he truly hated to cancel a patriotic event, but some of our regular attendees had expressed concern about it. The consensus was we should recognize the state of the pandemic at the time, and make the choice based on medical facts. The decision was that rather than endanger the health of those attending, the event should be cancelled. Mike then sent an email with that notification. Patriotic Instructor, Joe Fears, alerted those who had volunteered to participate.

Perhaps we can all find another way to show our respect for these Union soldiers, and honor them as we have in the past. In similar fashion, we can show that we respect those now living, who will continue to honor them in the days to come.



**Commander-in-Chief Brian C. Pierson**

### **Commander-in-Chief (2020 – 2021)**

(Reprinted from SUVCW Website)

At the 139th National Encampment, the first-ever virtual encampment due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War elected Brian C. Pierson of Bethel Acres, OK as the 133rd Brother to hold the office of Commander-in-Chief. As a dual member of the Departments of Georgia & South Carolina and from Oklahoma, he is the first Commander-in-Chief from either of these Departments. Brother Pierson entered the Order as a National Member at Large, and joined Charles Devens Camp #10 in Columbia, SC when the Camp and Department were organized in 2008. Within the Camp and Department, he has held the positions of Camp Commander, Department Patriotic Instructor, JVC, SVC, Department Commander, Chief of Staff, Newsletter Editor, among others. In 2014, he led the host committee for the National Encampment in Marietta, Georgia. At the National Level, he has served on the Council of Administration, National Military Affairs Committee, National Monuments Grants Committee Chair, and Strategic Planning & Vision

Committee.

Brother Pierson grew up in Marshfield, Massachusetts. He learned about the SUVCW after researching regimental inscriptions on his ancestors' gravestones. He traces his direct Civil War lineage through his great-great grandfather John Steilen (aka Steele), Private, Company I, 1st Wisconsin Cavalry, who also was a member of Henry Turner Post #46, New London, Dept. of Wisconsin, G.A.R., and also through a number of uncles, including Alanson Pierson, Private, Company C, 14th New York State Militia "Brooklyn Chasseurs," mortally wounded at the Battle of South Mountain. Brother Pierson is a 28-year Air Force veteran. He is a Master Navigator with over 5,400 flying hours and served in the Panama Invasion, Persian Gulf War, Kosovo Campaign, Global War on Terrorism, and Iraq Campaign where he was attached to the XVIIIth Airborne Corps in Baghdad. He has been credited with sea time on the USS Mount Whitney. In addition, he was non-voluntarily assigned to the Pentagon, Washington DC.

Brother Pierson is a Knight Commander with Star of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem. He is an Upper Freeman of the Honourable Company of Air Pilots, a livery company of the City of London, and is a member of the Mayflower Society, Sons of the American Revolution, Military Officers Association of America, Knights of Columbus, and the National Rifle Association. He currently serves on the town council of Bethel Acres, OK.

Brother Pierson is married to the former Denise Hudson of Shawnee, OK, a 5th generation Oklahoman whose family are among the original settlers of the Bethel Acres and Shawnee area after the 1889 Land Run. They have four sons.



**CinC Brian Pierson, flanked by members of the Jeremiah Smith Camp, speaks at their Remembrance Day ceremony.**



**Cdr. Mike Rusk pays his respects at the GAR Monument in Rose Hill Cemetery on Remembrance Day.**

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Union Ancestor of Charles William Walker, III:  
Sgt. Adam Kass  
29<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry Volunteers.  
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## Camp Calendar

Dec. 3      Camp Meeting – Parkview Baptist Church  
                 5805 S. Sheridan  
Dec. 25      Christmas  
Jan. 1        New Years  
Jan. 28      Camp Meeting – Location TBA

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