



THE TELEGRAPH KEY

THE OFFICIAL DISPATCH FOR THE MAJOR THOMAS J. KEY CAMP #1920
KANSAS DIVISION, SCV • JOHNSON COUNTY, KANSAS

• Vol. 24, No. 7

July 2023

Major Thomas J. Key Officers



Commander – *Walt Schley*



1st Lt. Commander- *Dan Peterson*



2nd Lt. Commander- *Paul Allen*



Adjutant- *Lawson Rener*



Chaplin – *Walt McKenzie*



Editor- *Rick McPherson*

The Confederate's Corner

By Rick McPherson

Greetings to all compatriots and friends of the
Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920.

The June 2023 meeting was attended by 15 members and 8
guests. This was the 237th regular meeting of the Major
Thomas J Key Camp #1920



Our June speaker was **State Commander** and **Key Camp Adjutant Lawson Rener** who spoke about the Fayetteville Confederate Cemetery and the Southern Women's Association Memorial event in which **Lawson** was to be the keynote speaker.

Lawson showed slides of the cemetery and told of its history and of more than 600 dead buried there from Confederate forces of Missouri, Texas, Arkansas and Louisiana.



Fayetteville Confederate Cemetery

Miscellaneous



Commander Walt Schley opened the meeting welcoming guests and offered our prayers for those with health concerns including **Dick Cole**, **Jim Edgington** and Susan Peterson.



Adjutant Lawson Rener provided the Camp's financial report and stated we had 2 new applications for membership. In addition, he reminded us that membership dues renewal of \$55 will be mailed out and due back August 1st.



Compatriot Chris Edwards spoke briefly on the **Disorder on the Border** program to be held August 12th in which the Key Camp is a co-sponsor. The Camp is donating \$102, a number that exceeds the **SUV's Franklin Camp** by \$1.



The **Key Camp** elected to donate \$100 toward the Southern Women's Memorial Association in Fayetteville, Arkansas. The motion made by **Compatriot Walt McKenzie** and approved unanimously.



The **Key Camp** voted enthusiastically to name our annual Camp picnic, the **Col. James "Spike" Speicher** picnic.



Compatriot McPherson presented "*Key Kamp Kapers*", a ppt presentation that included pictures of compatriots who participated at the Lone Jack Heritage Days and the **Mine Creek Park Day** events on behalf of the **Key Camp**. That was followed by a segment called "*Mystery Compatriot*" that featured **Adjutant Rener** from his high school days back in 1986. It was all in *fun* and a great sedge way to **Adjutant Rener** as our featured speaker.



Key Camp Web Page Hits from Jan 1st 2023 to date 447. (+38 in June)

Honoring our Key Camp's founder

The **Thomas J Key Camp #1920** received its charter as an official camp under **the Sons of Confederate Veterans** on May 22nd 2000. At that time, eight members were listed upon the charter. Leading that effort was retired **Colonel James L. "Spike" Speicher**.

Jim graduated from The Citadel in Charleston, South Carolina in 1968 and entered active duty with the U.S. Army as a Second Lieutenant. He was an Army Green Beret, a Professor of Military Science and a Department Director at the Army's Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth. He

September 2004, he
Analyst for the
from that position in



retired in January 2001 as a colonel. In
became the first Supervisory Intelligence
Kansas City Division of the FBI, retiring
January of 2013.

Jim had been a

ten. His hero was General

since he was 13 and was a member of the 3rd Battery Missouri Light Artillery, CSA. Jim was also a Life Member of the **Sons of Confederate Veterans**, and was the first commander of the **Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920**, serving from 2000 to 2015. *Fifteen years!*

As voted unanimously and enthusiastically by the members of the Key Camp, the annual fall picnic will this day forward be recognized as the:

Colonel James L. "Spike" Speicher picnic.

In honoring Jim, we also recognize his wife **Katherine "Kaki" Speicher** who alongside Jim was very active in the **Key Camp**.

It is only fitting, that in this gathering of members and families of the largest SCV camp in Kansas, we remember our friend and founder, in an event that inspires camaraderie, pay tribute to **Colonel James L. "Spike" Speicher**. (1946-2021)

June Happenings



Adjutant Lawson Rener was the keynote speaker at the Fayetteville Cemetery



Adjutant Lawson Rener and Compatriot Chris Edwards in Fayetteville, Ark.

The war has ended. Fierce battles have been fought in Northwest Arkansas, including the Battle of Pea Ridge, the Battle of Prairie Grove, and the Battle of Fayetteville. The harsh winters of 1861-1862 have left many soldiers very ill and claimed many lives. Graves are everywhere across Northwest Arkansas and the dead lay just where they fell.

Imagine to, living in Fayetteville in 1866. The city with a population of just under 1000, still mourning its dead and rebuilding from the destruction of the just ended war. Mass graves, lonely graves in pastures and roadsides held the remains of Union and Confederate dead.

The Federal government made arrangements to bury all of the Union dead in National Cemeteries, including the National Cemetery in Fayetteville. Confederate soldiers, however, were left where they'd fallen or where they'd been buried, sometimes in a mass grave or roadside grave.

Imagine also being the family member left behind... the wife, mother, sister, or daughter of a fallen Confederate soldier. All they wanted was a proper burial for their loved ones; they wanted them to be remembered. For this reason, the Southern Memorial Association was formed in 1872.

You could talk about dignity and about love no matter the side of war; you could talk about how important it is to remember war. Let me just share the words of ladies from the Southern Memorial Association, as they worked to raise funds for moving the bodies of their dead. These words are written on an informational plaque inside the Confederate Cemetery...

“Help us gather the moldering bones of our soldiers from the barren hillsides and place them beside their fallen brothers to rest where their graves may be bedewed with the tears of their kindred and strewn by the hand of affection with brightest flowers.”

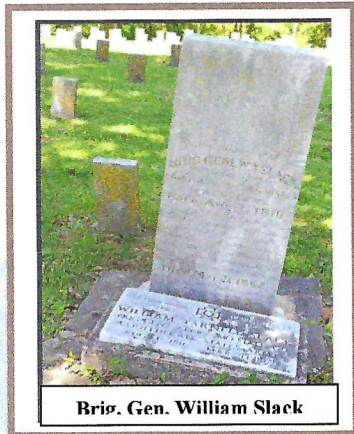
Those words will forever haunt me. So poetic... so beautiful... so filled with grief and desire to bury their dead with dignity and love... filled with, I can only imagine, a desire for closure. And after one year of raising the funds, they celebrated the dedication of the cemetery.

Upon arrival at Confederate Cemetery, you'll enter the gate and cross beyond the rock wall that was built in 1885. An informational plaque rests just beyond the gate with the story of how it all came to be. Beyond sits a gazebo where you can sit and rest.

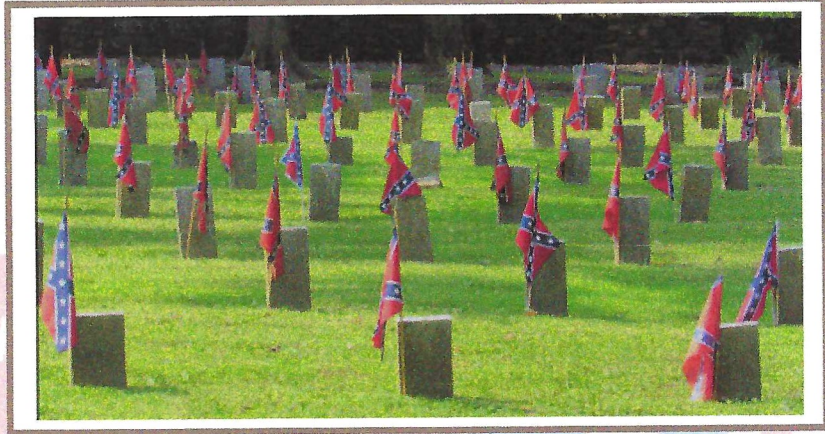
Confederate Cemetery is one of the most peaceful places you can visit. Beautiful, old, very tall trees shade the stone graves. Grass grows all around, not perfectly mown but still kept up quite nicely. It's simply gorgeous and beautiful.

*Graves are arranged by state with a monument in the middle pointing to each state's section... Arkansas, Missouri, Texas, and Louisiana. At the top of the cemetery are the Arkansas graves. Most are either unmarked or not legible anymore, though there are a few that have writing, including the **grave of Brigadier General William Yarnell Slack**.*





Brig. Gen. William Slack



As you walk around, the sounds of the city faded to quiet. It was almost as if when you walked through the wrought iron gate, through that beautiful rock wall, you entered another world, another world that exists beyond the everyday life. You just can't get over how peaceful and beautiful it truly is.

*On Saturday June 3rd, **Key Camp Adjutant Lawson Renner** was the keynote speaker for the association's 150th anniversary. Also attending was **Compatriot Chris Edwards** of the Key Camp.*

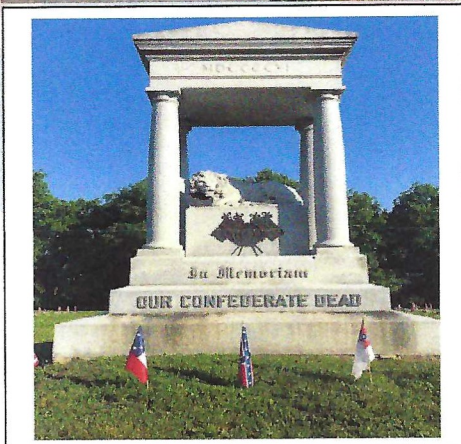
If you find yourself in the Fayetteville area, this is a must stop to appreciate one of few Confederate Cemetery's in our area.



Meanwhile...in Higginsville

The Key Camp set up their tent with artifact display at the Confederate Cemetery in Higginsville Missouri on Saturday June 3rd as part of Confederate Memorial Day celebrations. The event included period music, speakers which included our own **Compatriot Paul Allen** and the laying of red carnations by descendants of Confederate soldiers who attended the event.

Among those attending were Commander **Walt Sewell**, **Rick McPherson**, **Paul** and **Betty Allen** and **Monet Belinger-Kietzman**.



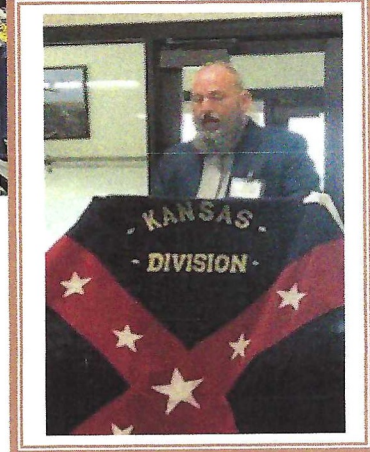
Kansas Division Reunion

*The 2023 Kansas Division Reunion was held Saturday June 17th in Topeka at the Kansas National Guard Museum. Four of the five camps in the State were represented with the **Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920** leading the way with eleven representatives including **Carl Linck** and **Park Vansickle**, **Clayton Campbell**, **Dan Peterson**, **Tim Peterman**, **Lane Smith**, **Past Commander Matt Sewell**, **Chris Edwards**, **Chief of Staff Rick McPherson**, **Commander Walt Schley** and **State Commander Lawson Rener**.*

*Speaking to those assembled were **Monet Belinger- Keitzman** from the Ladies of the Plains/UDC and **Compatriot Jim Dick**, administrator of the Mine Creek Battlefield Museum in Pleasanton, KS.*

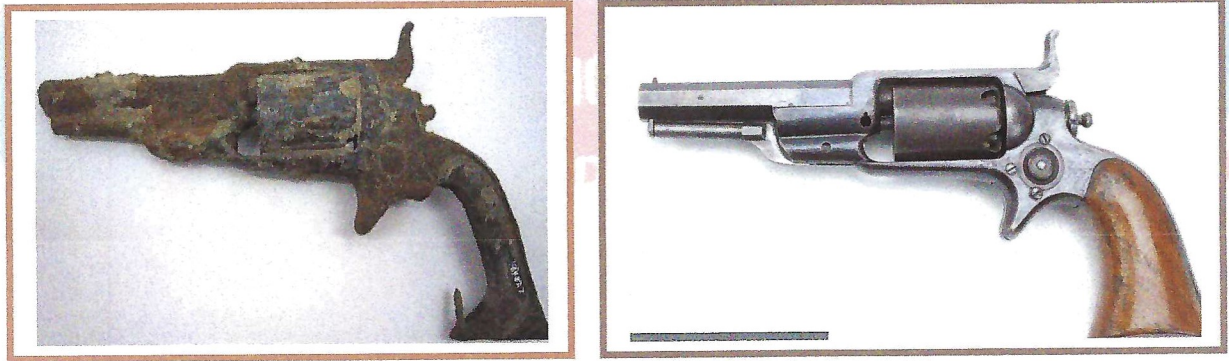
*Division Commander **Lawson Rener** was elected to a 2nd term and **Rick McPherson** was elected **Division Lieutenant Commander**. Congratulations to **Lawson** and **Rick** and thank you to all who represented the Key Camp at our Division Reunion.*

EST. Oh, and I had to spotlight the surprised look on Lane face below!



See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp

Colt Model 1855 "Root"



.The picture (above left) is the pistol from this account and on the (above right) is what that revolver would look like if it were not damaged.

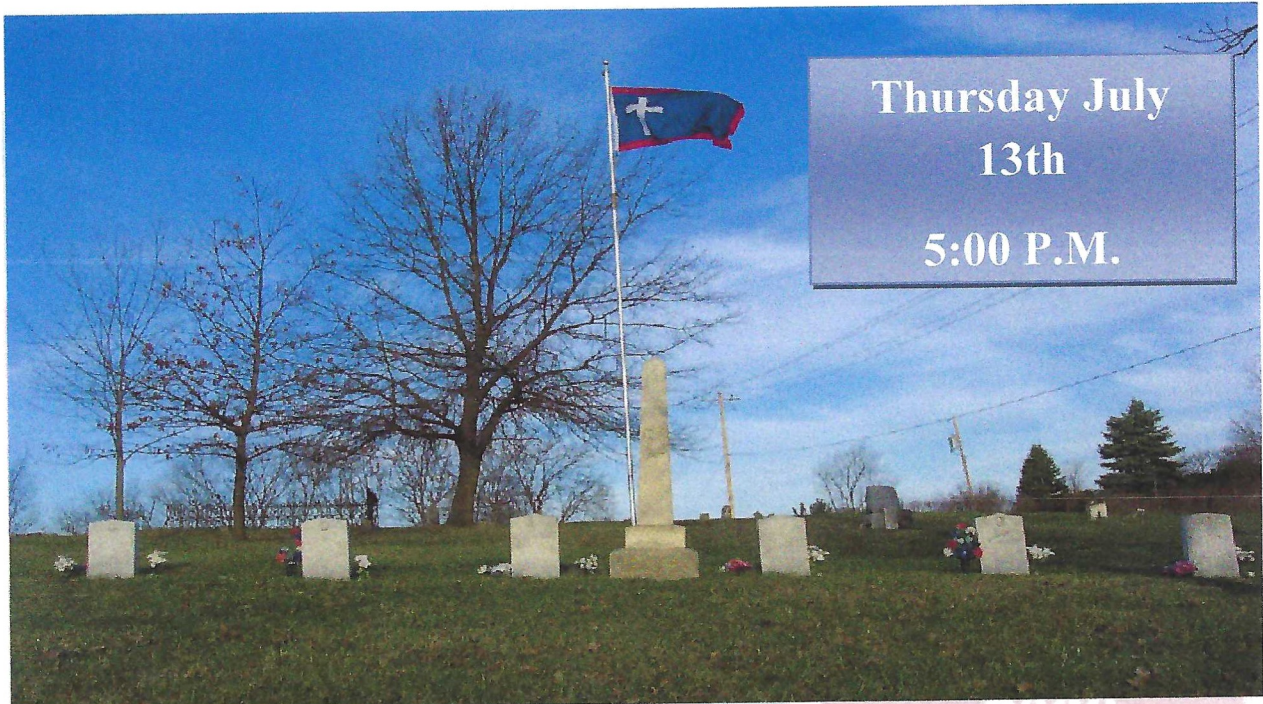
Above left is a captured Colt Model 1855 "Root" side hammer revolver. This .28 caliber, five-shot percussion revolver, belonged to Lieutenant Colonel Bartley B. Boone of the **2nd Mississippi Infantry**, who was captured by Javan B. Irvine of the 1st Minnesota Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Company A, during the Battle of First Manassas.

At First Manassas, the 1st Minnesota had not yet been issued regular army uniforms and most of the men were wearing red flannel shirts, similar to the style worn by both the 4th Alabama and several companies of the **2nd Mississippi**.

During some of the hottest fighting on the far Confederate left, a couple of companies from the 1st Minnesota were separated from the rest of their regiment and found themselves on the left and rear of the **2nd Mississippi**. As the regiment was taking casualties from fire from this direction, Lt. Col. Boone thought that the troops were "friendlies" of the 4th Alabama. He rode forward to order the men to stop firing on their friends. The uniform confusion allowed Private Irvine of the 1st Minnesota to force Lt. Col. Boone to surrender. Boone was the highest-ranking Confederate officer captured at First Manassas. At gunpoint, Irvine forced Boone to dismount, disarmed him, and turned him over to a Union lieutenant to be taken to General Irvin McDowell. While Irvine sent Boone's sword with him, he kept the revolver for himself.

The pistol is on display in the Minnesota State Historical

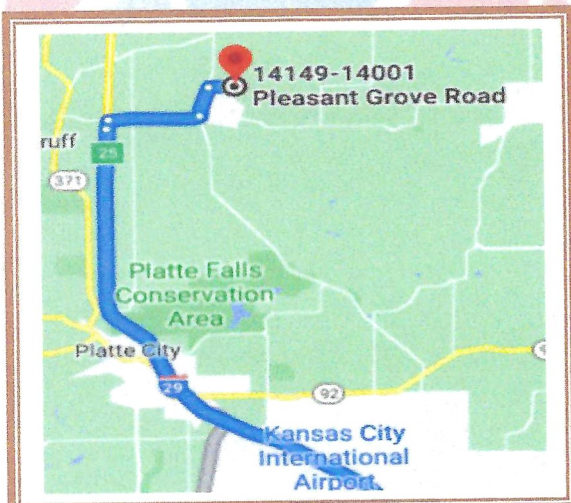
Camden Point Memorial Service



Join us **Thursday July 13th**, 2023 at Camden Point (MO), for our memorial service and picnic. Festivities start at 5:00 pm with the memorial service followed by a BBQ and fellowship.

BBQ will be provided!

Bring a lawn chair and a dish to share.
(Set up 4:30)

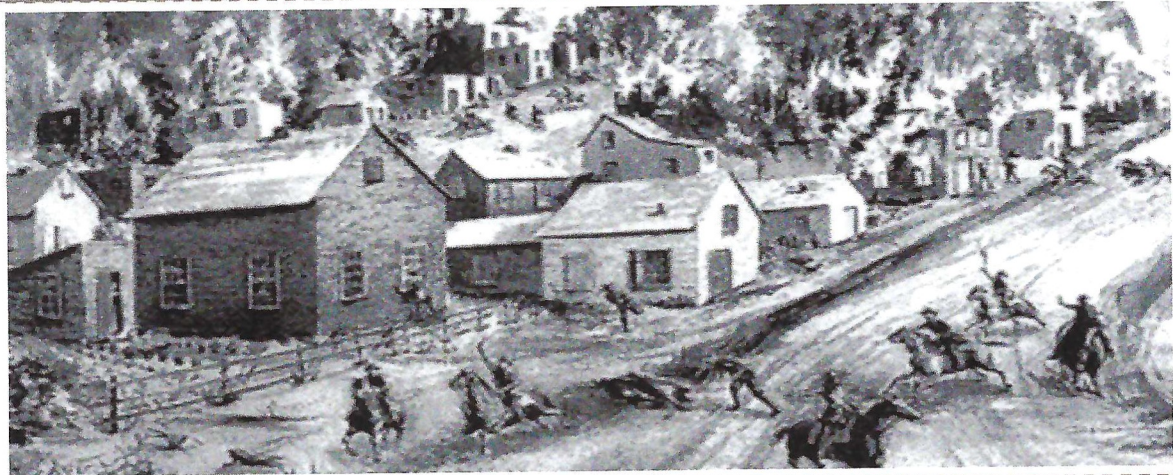
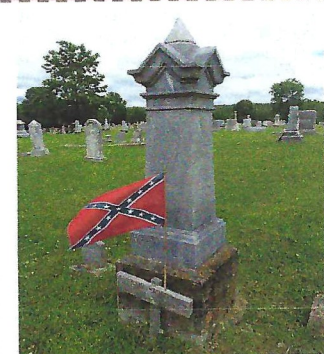


See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp

Miscellaneous

Adjutant Lawson Rener was out this past weekend, doing some hiking around Osceola, Missouri when he stopped by Iconium Cemetery and took some pictures.

Nearby, on his attack on Osceola, Sen. James Lane and a band of **jayhawkers**, defeated a secessionist force, looted the town of 2,500 residents, liberated hundreds of slaves, and summarily executed nine locals. Of the 800 buildings in town, only three were spared from burning. The town never really recovered and has less than a 1,000 residents today. The raid by Lane is said to have inspired the attack on Lawrence by **William Clarke Quantrill**.



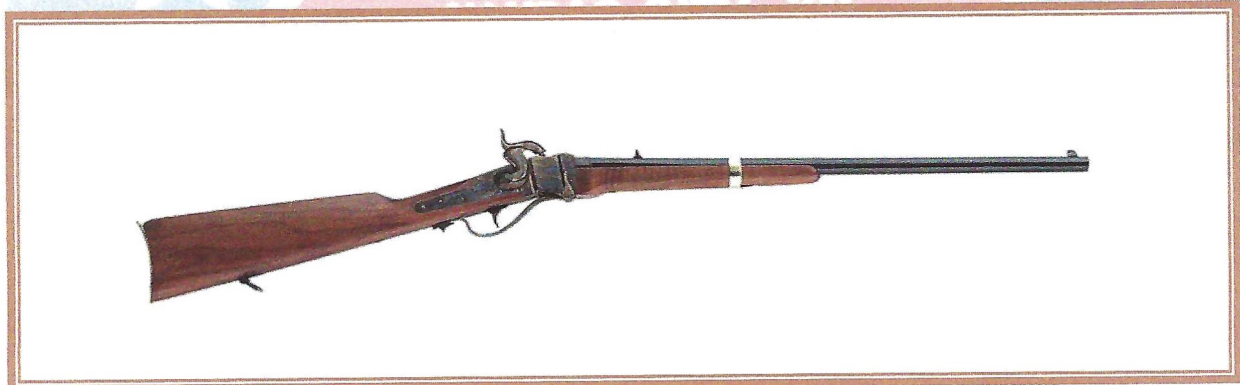
See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp

Thank you!

Thanks to the quick action of **Commander Walt Schley**, the Key Camp now has several new “artifacts” to display at future community events including two **displays of bullets** that were part of various civil war battles. These items came courtesy of **Compatriot Neal Hanley** of the Leavenworth Camp who felt the Key Camp would enjoy displaying them.

In addition, **Commander Schley** purchased an **1855 Sharps Carbine Rifle** to add to our gun display. Known for its long-range accuracy, the Sharps rifle played a prominent role in the Bleeding Kansas conflict during the 1850’s, particularly at the hands of anti-slavery forces.

It was used in the Civil War by both Union and Confederate Cavalry armies prior to being replaced by the seven-shot Spencer carbines. **Thanks Walt!**



2023 Sons of Confederate Veterans National Reunion

www.2023scvreunion.org

Hosted By The James M Keller Camp #648

Hot Springs National Park, Arkansas

July 19, 20, 21, 22nd 2023



The Arlington Hotel is the Official Hotel of the 2023 SCV National Reunion

**The Arlington Hotel is located at 239 Central Avenue in
Hot Springs, Arkansas**

Tel: (501) 623-7771 (800) 643-1502

Website: www.arlingtonhotel.com

Room Rates: Single/One Adult: \$109.00 Double/Two Adults: \$109

Mineral Water Room: \$149.00

***** Make sure to mention 2023 SCV Reunion to receive the special Reunion Rate!*****

For Registration and other forms go to:

www.scv2023reunion.org

Disorder on the Border

Sat. Aug 12th 2023 at 9:30 AM CDT - By Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area



A Symposium on the Events and Effects of the Civil War on the Missouri-Kansas Border

August 12, 2023
9:30am-5:30pm

Day Includes:

SPEAKERS Dr. Joseph Bellein Jr. George Pettigrew Jonathan Jones Carole Shelton Chris Edwards Sam Farr Sagastume Tom Rafiner	CATERED LUNCH Kurzweil's Country Meats
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- Historical Book Vendors
- Historical Organizations Information Tables
- Border War Drawing (cash only)
- Historic Harrisonville Square Walking Tour
- Swag Bag

Sponsored by:        

Advance registration is required. Tickets for the program are \$35 and include access to all sessions, along with access to historical book vendors, historical organizations' information tables, a Border War drawing, and a walking tour of the Historic Harrisonville Square. Ticket holders will also receive a swag bag.

The event will be held at: Harrisonville Community Center; 2400 S Jefferson Pkwy; Peculiar Township MO, 64701.

The Major Thomas J Key Camp #1820 has provided sponsorship for the symposium. We may be seeking volunteers to staff the information table for our organization.

For more information contact **Compatriot Chris Edwards** or copy this link into your browser to purchase tickets online and in advance:

<https://secure.givelively.org/event/freedom-s-frontier-national-heritage-area/disorder-on-the-border>

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Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920

Johnson County, Kansas
Camp Activities



Camden Point Memorial Service May 13th 5:00 pm
National SCV Reunion July 19-22 – Hot Springs, Ark

As always, we encourage your participation in your Camp's activities.
*Email **Commander Schley** for more information on any events you are interested in assisting*

*****NEXT CAMP MEETING*****

The Key Camp will meet on **Thursday July 6th** at Zarda's Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official meeting starting at **6:30 p.m.** You are invited to arrive early (6:00 p.m.) for BBQ, conversation and camaraderie.

Our guest speaker will be **Jim Beckner**, well known local historian and re-enactor. Jim served as President of the Civil War Roundtable of KC and is a SOB. Please join us and welcome our friend, **Jim Beckner** to the Key Camp meeting on Thursday.

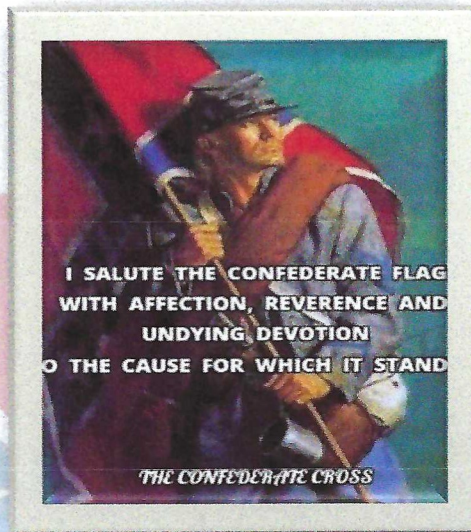


The Telegraph Key

The Telegraph Key is a newsletter published for the Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV). The SCV is a non-profit organization with a patriotism historical and genealogical orientation and is not affiliated with any other organization. Opinions in this newsletter reflect the views of the writers and contributors 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.



See us on Facebook – Enter Major Thomas J Key Camp



Key Camp Web Page: www.majorthomasjkeycamp1920.com

Email: Commander Walt Schley: gunnerschley@gmail.com

**Key Camp Facebook Page:
Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920**

**National SCV Web Page
www.scv.org**



“To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we submit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought; to your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier’s good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish.”

Lt. General Stephen Dill Lee, Commander General, United Confederate Veterans, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1906

*Individuals attending events hosted by the **Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920** and the **Sons of Confederate Veterans**, by virtue of their attendance, agree to the usage of their likeness in the any Camp Newsletter, any **SCV/Camp** website and/or on any **SCV/Camp** Social Media outlet, or any other **SCV/Camp** material.*