



# THE TELEGRAPH KEY

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

Vol. 22, No 10

October 2021

## The Confederate's Corner

By Rick McPherson

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

*Recap of Camp Business of September 2nd, 2021*



**Cmdr. Matt Sewell** began the meeting by asking prayers for the family of **Lawson Rener** who recently lost a family member. **Chaplin Walt Schley** gave the opening prayer which also included those in our military, for those displaced by the upheaval in Afghanistan and especially for our 13 heroic fallen soldiers.

*Commander Sewell gave a brief recap of upcoming events, our membership totals and introduced our newest member before beginning his presentation.*



**Compatriot Tom Simpson** is our newest member. He joins us a descendant of an Alabama Confederate soldier. Tom lives in Leawood.

### Major Thomas J. Key

#### Camp Officers

##### Commander

Matt Sewell

##### 1st Lt. Commander

Vacant

##### 2nd Lt. Commander

Dan Peterson

##### Adjutant

Lawson Rener

##### Chaplin

Walt Schley

##### Newsletter Editor

Rick McPherson

The Camp is determining how we can best utilize our media presence, specifically our Key Camp web site. **Compatriot Tom Weir** has been subsidizing the cost of maintaining our web page which is greatly appreciated. **Rick** will assume the role as webmaster as well as maintaining the Camp's scrapbook and the new Facebook page. We encourage each of you to submit photo's, stories, biographies etc. to be used for future publications of the newsletter and please join the Facebook page.

**Matt** announced an invitation by the United Daughters (UDC) of the Confederacy to attend their September 11<sup>th</sup> meeting where **Compatriot Lane Smith** would speak.



**Matt** reported the Shawnee Indian Mission Festival had been cancelled due to public health concerns brought on by Covid and the new Delta variant.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Commander Dan Peterson** gave a brief report of the Camp's activity at the Mine Creek and Lone Jack Heritage Days.

It was mentioned that **Walt Schley** and **Rick** would be attending the Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest re-internment in Columbia, TN. the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of September. [A brief video recap will be shown at our next meeting. You won't want to miss this!](#)

**We have a new Camp Facebook page. Join at "Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920"**



### Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920

Private group · 9 members



Joined

+ Invite

About Discussion Rooms Topics Members Events Media Files





**Our Presenter  
Commander Sewell**



Emma Sansom



Emma's statue in  
Gadsden, AL.

Our September program was presented by **Commander Matt Sewell** titled, "Emma Sanson, a Ride to Remember", which was about Miss Emma Sanson, age 15, a farm girl from **Matt's** hometown of Gadsden, Alabama.

In April 1863, Confederate Brig Gen Nathan Bedford Forrest was ordered into northern Alabama to pursue Union Colonel Abel Streight, who had orders to cut off the Confederate railroad near Chattanooga, TN. On May 2, 1863, Streight arrived just outside Gadsden and prepared to cross Black Creek. Because the creek was swollen due to rain, Streight realized that if he destroyed the bridge he could get a few hours' respite from the pursuit of Forrest. Seeing the nearby Sansom farmhouse, he rode upon it and demanded some smoldering coal, which he could use to burn the bridge. When Forrest's men arrived at the site, they found the burned out bridge and came under fire from Streight's men.

Forrest rode to the Sansom house and asked whether there was another bridge across the creek. Emma Sansom, then 16 years old, told him that the nearest bridge was in Gadsden, 2 miles away. Forrest then asked if there was a place where he could get across the creek. Emma told him that if one of his men would help saddle her horse, she would show him a place that she had seen cows cross the creek, and that he might be able to cross there. He replied that there was no time to saddle a horse and asked her to get on his horse behind him. As they started to leave, Emma's mother objected, but relented when Forrest assured her that he would bring the girl back safely. Emma then directed Forrest to the spot where he could cross the river. Some accounts of the skirmish indicate that the two came under fire from Union soldiers, who subsequently ceased fire when they realized that they had been firing on a teenage girl. After taking Emma back to her home, Forrest continued his pursuit of Streight, whom he was able to capture near Cedar Bluff on the following day.

Emma's actions are noteworthy in that openly aiding Confederate forces could have subjected her and her family to prosecution (or even death) from the Union Army.

*Great story **Matt** and thank you for telling it to the group.*



Remembering our Confederate Ancestors

**“Every soldier’s grave made during the unfortunate civil war is a tribute to the American valor. And while when those graves were made and we differed widely about the future of the Government, those differences were long ago settled by- the arbitrament of arms— and the time has now come in the evolution of sentiment and feeling under the providence of God, when, in the spirit of fraternity, we should share with you in the care of the graves of the Confederate soldier.”**

Sacramento Dailey Union-December 1898

***“If You Speak Their Name, They Are Not Gone”***



**Gen. Robert E. Lee**

Robert E Lee was married to a 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin, Mary Custis. On **September 8, 2021** his statue was removed from atop a pedestal along Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia where it stood for more than 130 years. At least 114 Confederate monuments have now been removed from public spaces that began in 2016, but taking down Lee’s statue was a bit personal for all of us.

Those statues represented military heroes we heard about as kids; historical figures that were both honored and glamorized on TV and in movies. They were also the toy soldiers we played with for hours. We had already lost JEB, Stonewall and Jeff Davis but sadly today was the when the biggest icon of them all came down.

Here in Kansas City the statue in Fairview Cemetery in Liberty is under attack. Next could be the Forrest Hills Cemetery monument. The question is, what role should we as a group play in protecting these monuments in Kansas City? Should have that discussion?

Our SCV membership allows all of us to honor and perpetuate the history and memory of our Confederate ancestors. Though their statues may be gone, those they represented will live on.

**Rick McPherson**



*"There was a land of Cavaliers and Cotton Fields called the Old South. Here in this pretty world, Gallantry took its last bow. Here was the last ever to be seen of Knights and their Ladies Fair, of Master and of Slave.*

*Look for it only in books, for it is no more than a dream remembered, a Civilization gone with the wind."*

Prologue – Gone With the Wind



***Annual Camp Cookout at Shawnee Mission Park on Saturday September 11<sup>th</sup>.***

See more pictures on the [Thomas J Key Camp #1920 Facebook page](#)





## REMEMBERING

### JAMES L. "SPIKE" SPEICHER

TO VIEW C-SPAN VIDEO OF SPIKE'S PRESENTATION OF THE H.L. HUNLEY

[WWW.C-SPAN.ORG/VIDEO/?319003-1/SUBMARINE-HL-HUNLEY](http://WWW.C-SPAN.ORG/VIDEO/?319003-1/SUBMARINE-HL-HUNLEY)

United States Army retiree James L. "Spike" Speicher traveled the nation serving his country during his thirty-year military career. Assisting as the mobilization officer for the Army Reserve Personnel Center in St. Louis, Missouri, he assembled several hundred individual reservists for Operation Desert Storm. In addition to commanding a 180-man infantry company at Fort Richardson in Anchorage, Alaska, Speicher was stationed in Fort Benning, Georgia, and Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

He has held numerous government positions, including department director for the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas; supervisor for the U.S. government in Kansas City, Missouri; second lieutenant in the U.S. Army; and advisor to the Twelfth Special Forces Group's Second Battalion in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Along with his military service, Speicher served as a law enforcement officer with both the Bloomfield Township Police Department and the Oakland County Sherriff's Department.

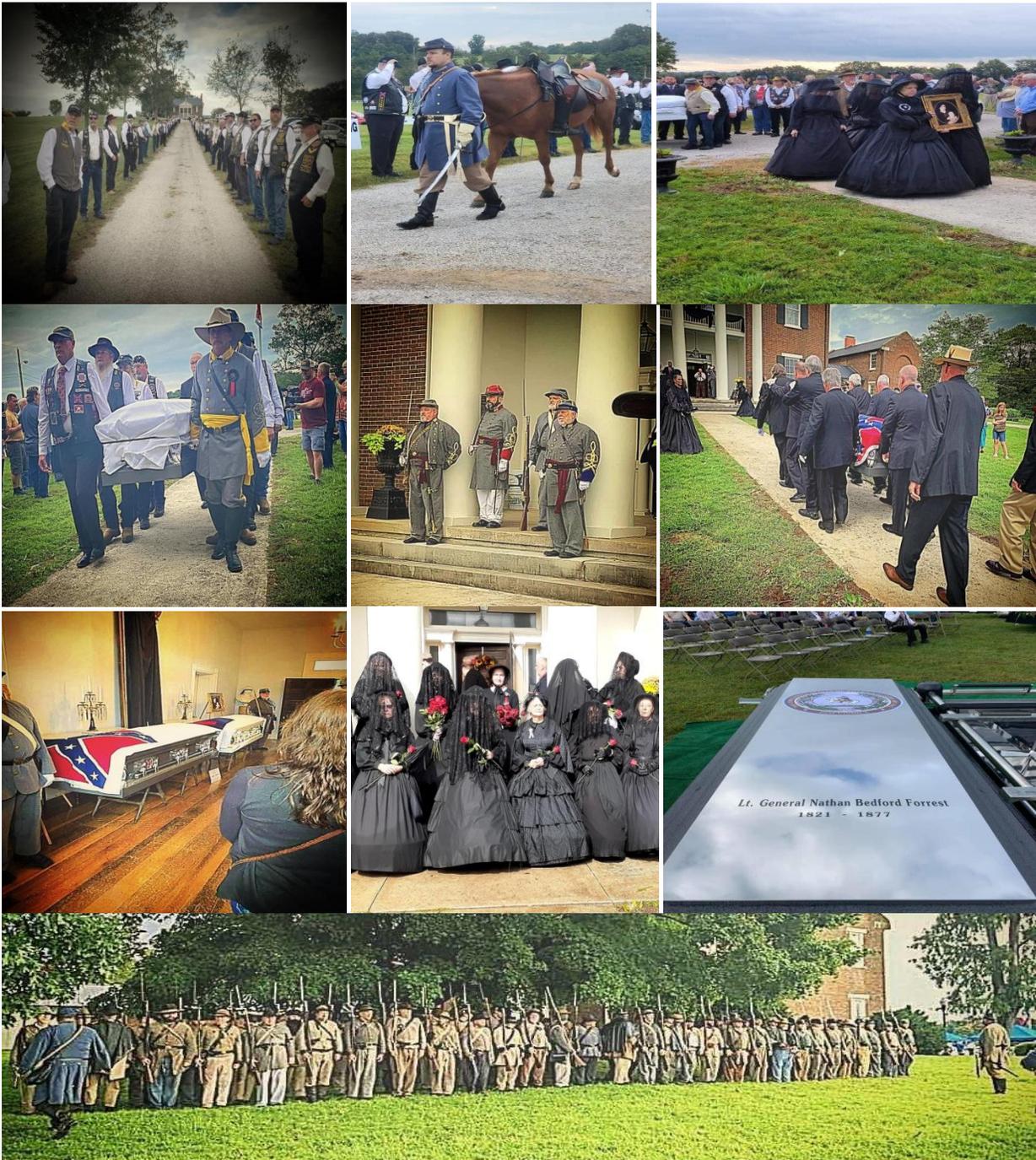
He was a member of the Civil War Round Table of Kansas City, the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Sons of the Confederate Veterans, where he has held office at the national, state, and local levels. In 2000, he helped form and eventually became commander of a camp affiliated with the Sons of the Confederate Veterans called Major Thomas J. Key Camp #1920.

Speicher contributed to several military publications including Soldier of Fortune Magazine, America's Civil War magazine, Confederate Veteran magazine, and the Civil War Historian Magazine. After obtaining a BA in history from The Citadel, he received an AAS in law enforcement from Oakland County Community College, an MA in public administration from Wayne State University, and an MA in management from Webster University.

Along with his memberships and contributions, Speicher enjoyed diving and was a Professional Association of Diving Instructors master instructor for ten years. He has also participated in Civil War reenacting, which is his favorite pastime. He previously resided in Shawnee, Kansas, with his wife before retiring to Florida.

Spike passed away on September 11<sup>th</sup> in Florida following a long battle with Cancer. His wife and family are remembered by all who knew him, by his fellow Compatriots at the Major Thomas J Key Camp and a nation, grateful for his service

**General Nathan Bedford Forrest Funeral** Attended by Walt Schley and Rick McPherson





More pictures on: [\*Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920\*](#) Facebook page

***Be sure to attend next Thursday's meeting for a special video highlight of this event!***



Major **Thomas J. Key Camp** #1920  
Johnson County, Kansas  
Camp Activities



*35<sup>th</sup> Shawnee Indian Mission Festival*

October 9 – 10, 2021  
Event Cancelled

*November Camp Meeting*

Thursday November 4<sup>th</sup> 7:00 pm (but come early @ 6:30 for dinner & conversation)

*Leavenworth County Veterans Day Parade*

November 11<sup>th</sup> 10:30 am

*Lee – Jackson Banquet*

January 2022

Abdullah Shrine Temple

5300 Metcalf Avenue Overland Park, Kansas 66202

*As always, we encourage your participation in your Camp's activities.*

*Email **Commander Sewell** for more information on any events you are interested in assisting*



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

**Our Speaker – Thursday October 7<sup>th</sup>**

**Rick McPherson will present: “Born Fighting, How the Scottish culture helped shaped the South and why they fought in the War for Southern Independence”**

**Also, Past Commander Jim Thornton will join us to present his remembrance of James L “Spike” Speicher**

The Key Camp will meet on Thursday September 2nd at Zarda’s Bar B-Q on the southwest corner of 87th and Quivera in Lenexa, Kansas with the official meeting starting at 7:00 p.m. You are invited to arrive early (6:00 p.m.) for BBQ, conversation and camaraderie.

**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.

## Key Camp Website Resources

Key Camp: [www.MajorKey1920ksscvc.org](http://www.MajorKey1920ksscvc.org)

SCV National: [www.SCV.org](http://www.SCV.org)

Kansas Division: [www.ksscvc.org](http://www.ksscvc.org)

Facebook: Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920

**New!**

Now we have a Facebook site.

Search for "Major Thomas J Key Camp #1920" and request to become a member.





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