

SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR

COL. HANS C. HEG CAMP #15
WIND LAKE, WIS. DECEMBER 2019



**WE ARE THE
BEST CAMP IN
THE COUNTRY -
SAYS WHO?
SAYS OLD ABE!**

To the left is the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief award, given to Camp #15 as the best camp in the entire SUCVW. We were awarded this honor at the National Encampment in August and in mid-December, the statue of Lincoln that is the physical embodiment of the award, arrived in the mail.

Take a good, long look, Brothers. This is our Oscar, our Lombardi trophy.

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Photos courtesy of Brian McManus

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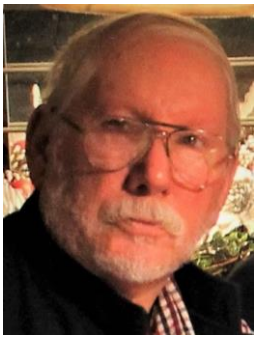
This is an incredible honor for our young camp, born just five years ago when three of our brothers - Brian McManus, Jeff Graf and Bob Koenecke - left Camp #1 in Milwaukee to form a new camp centered on western Racine County. The statue belongs to all of us in Camp #15 for all of our hard work over the past couple of years. Cherish the award, Brothers.

The inscription, on the seat of the chair behind the standing Lincoln, says it all: “On the Tenth Day of August in the year Two Thousand Nineteen at the One Hundred Thirty-Eighth National Encampment of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War in Independence, Ohio Hans Heg Camp #15 Department of Wisconsin received the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief Outstanding Camp Award.”

Our work trying to get Luther Parker Cemetery in Muskego cleaned up - work spearheaded by now Wisconsin Department Commander Jeff Graf - was a key factor in National Commander-in-Chief Don Shaw’s awarding us this trophy. Another was the on-going campaign, led by Bob “Get It Done” Koenecke, to install a Last Soldier Marker on the grave of every last Civil War veteran buried in each of Wisconsin’s 72 counties.

And let’s not forget the incredible job Camp Secretary-Treasurer Brian McManus has done since the camp’s founding and the year he put in as Wisconsin Department Commander - another factor in our getting this award. A big thank you to all of them - and to all of you.





CAMP COMMANDER'S COLUMN

By Commander Dave Daley

What a year, Brothers. As we close out 2019, we can look back with great pride and a sense of real accomplishment over Camp #15's year. In the spring and summer, we dedicated Last Soldier Markers all over the state, some with the help of brother camps - in particular, Camp #8 in the Fox Cities-Oshkosh region and Camp #49 in Boscobel in southwestern Wisconsin.

In the summer, we became landlords, receiving as a gift the historic Lafayette Church, built in 1855 in Lafayette Township in Walworth County. We are now storing the camp's archives in the church basement and mulling plans on how to best use the building as a camp resource that also preserves the church as the landmark it is in the township.

Our membership is growing, now at 44 members, the biggest of the camps in Wisconsin.

And to cap off the year, in August we were given the National SUVCW's top honor, the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief award, designating us as the outstanding camp out of the more than 250 camps across the country. My cap is off to you all. You, Camp #15 brothers, are what makes our camp the gold standard for the Wisconsin Department of the Sons. Take a deep bow. Keep up the good work. And Merry Christmas to you all and your families.



At the grave of Col. Hans C. Heg in Wind Lake, members of Camp #15 laid a Christmas wreath on Dec. 14th, part of Wreaths Across America ceremonies held all over the country that day to honor military veterans. In the middle, Brian McManus, holding the Abraham Lincoln Commander-in-Chief trophy. From left: Jerry Coveney, Sam Keith, Bob Koenecke, Brian McManus, Jeff Graf, Rich Kallan, Gerry Drought and David K. Miller.



Frank Gimbel and Kathy Keppel are presented a commendation from Camp #15 for their work on our Luther Parker Cemetery lawsuit. Presenting the awards are Camp #15's Secretary-Treasurer Brian McManus (left) and Camp Commander Dave Daley (right.)

Our fight to clean up Luther Parker Cemetery in Muskego ended on a sour note last year when a judge ruled the city was immune from lawsuits like the one filed on our behalf by attorney Frank Gimbel. But the lawsuit put Camp #15 on the right side of the issue, as National Commander-in-Chief Don Shaw said at the time. And our camp put a public spotlight on the disgraceful way Muskego maintains a cemetery where Civil War veterans are buried.

For more than two years, Gimbel and his Milwaukee law firm represented us pro bono – for free. Gimbel is one of Milwaukee's top attorneys and that added up to as much as \$40,000 in legal bills had we been one of his paying customers. On October 2nd, Camp #15 presented Frank Gimbel and Kathy Keppel, his attorney who did much of the day-to-day work, with certificates of commendation from the camp. It was little enough we could do for Frank Gimbel taking up our cause. Thank you, Frank. And God bless you and your law firm.

Weed-choked Luther Parker Cemetery



Camp #15's honor guard, helped by the American Legion and VFW, firing a musket salute at the dedication of a Last Soldier Marker in Waldwick, Wis., August 31.



Last Soldier Dedication in Waldwick, Wisconsin

On a bright, sunny Saturday on the last day of August, the brothers in Camp #15 had the honor of celebrating the life of Sergeant Jeremiah J. Humbert, the last Civil War soldier buried in Iowa County in southwestern Wisconsin. In a cemetery in tiny Waldwick, Wis., descendants of Sergeant Humbert gathered from across the state and around the country to dedicate a Last Soldier Marker for the sergeant. His life was indeed remarkable.

Born in 1842 to a Pennsylvania Dutch couple, Jeremiah at age 14 emigrated to Mineral Point, Wis., with his parents, traveling in a covered wagon to what was then largely unsettled country, and helped his parents homestead a pioneer farm. At 19, he married a Waldwick girl, Mary E. Hall, and built a log cabin for the two of them, their first home in the Town of Waldwick.

With the Civil War, Jeremiah enlisted in the 35th Wisconsin Infantry. *(continued next page)*

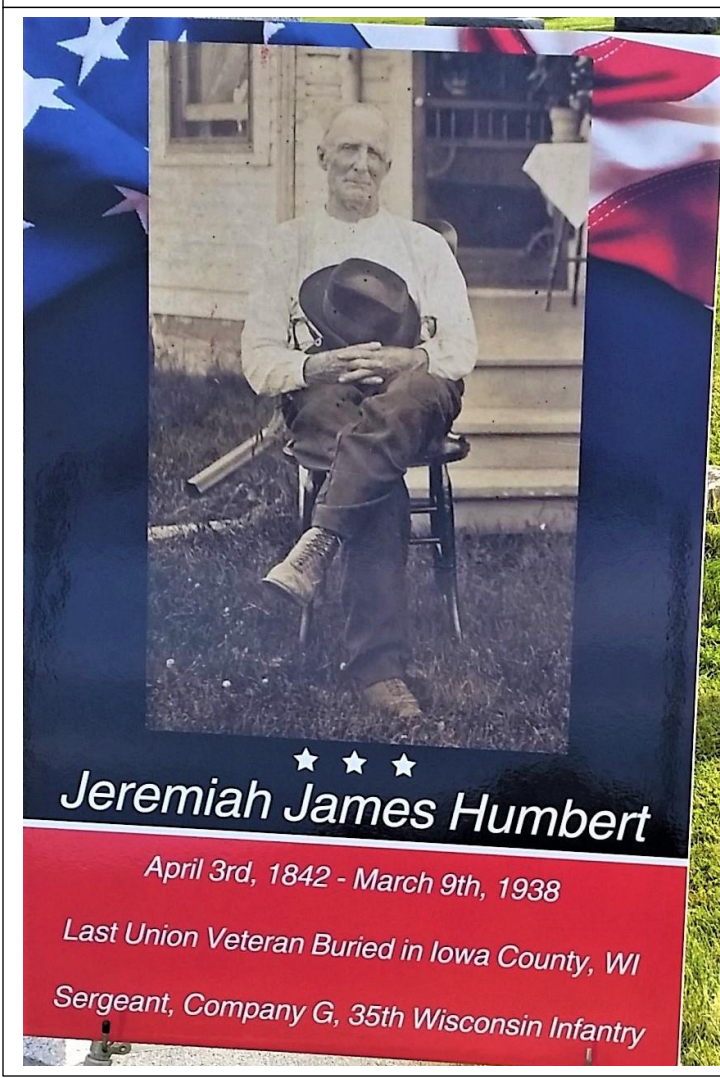


Descendants Lisa Montgomery and Jack Humbert



Jeremiah J. Humbert, 1842-1938, Sergeant, Co. G, 35th Wisconsin Infantry Regiment

Jeremiah J. Humbert - Last Civil War Soldier buried in Iowa County, Wis.



(continued from page 5) At the battle of Port Hudson in Louisiana, he was wounded twice, recovered and took part in the final engagements of the war, including the battles of Fort Spanish and Fort Blakely in Alabama.

Sergeant Humbert returned home to Waldwick and his wife and went back to farming, with his wife raising a family of eight and becoming an esteemed member of the community affectionately known as “Uncle Jerry.”

His great-grandson, Jack Humbert, of Pinellas Park, Florida, remembered him at the Aug. 31st dedication. Jack told, as a boy, of climbing into his great-grandfather’s lap and how scratchy his old wool Union Army uniform was.

Great-great-great-granddaughter Lisa Montgomery of Huntsville, Alabama, also spoke. “We are here today to not only honor him but to honor all soldiers who heeded the call to serve, left their homes and families to fight for a cause that they believed in, that ultimately preserved this great nation,” she said. Amen.

Camp #8 Brothers Spearhead Last Soldier Campaign in the North Woods



On Saturday Sept. 14th, Camp #8 brothers dedicated two Last Soldier graves, one in Adams County, the second in Wood County. At Forest Hill Cemetery in Wisconsin Rapids, James D. Gibson was honored as the last Civil War veteran in Wood County. Camp #15 was proud to send two officers to help Camp #8 with the ceremonies.

Camp #8 Commander **Kim Heltemes** leading the dedication ceremony on Sept. 14th at White Creek Cemetery for Hamilton Walrath of White Creek, Wis., the last Civil War soldier buried in Adams County.



Camp #8 Commander **Kim Heltemes**, **Brian McManus**, Camp #8's **Bill Parker**, and **Dave Daley**, at Adams County Last Soldier ceremony. Also attending was **Steve Bultman**, Camp #49. Photos courtesy Kim Heltemes

Camp #8 based in the Fox Cities-Oshkosh region is leading the efforts to install Last Soldier Markers in northeast and far northern Wisconsin. So far, the camp has dedicated graves in five counties and purchased markers for the last Civil War soldiers buried in another five counties. A job well done, Camp #8. Your Camp #15 brothers salute you - and thank you, too.



Last Civil War Soldiers in Green and Lafayette Counties Honored

Jon Rupp of Monroe, Wis., examining the newly installed Last Soldier Marker at the grave of James M. Divan, the last Civil War veteran buried in Green County. This was the second dedication by our camp on Aug. 31st. Divan served in the 5th Wisconsin Light Artillery and took part in the battles of Chattanooga, Stones River and Chickamauga. He was one of the Green County boys from Monroe who joined when the war began. He died in 1936 at age 93. Rupp, a member of the Green County Historical Society's board of directors, helped organize Camp #15's dedication at Divan's grave at Michael Cemetery outside Browntown.

Known as "Mr. Civil War" in Green County, with five relatives who served in the war, Rupp applied to be a member of Camp #15 in December. Welcome to our camp, Brother Jon.



A three-volley musket salute, helped by local VFW post. Photo Monroe Times.

At Blaisdell Cemetery near South Wayne, Wis., we dedicated a third Last Soldier Marker on Aug. 31st, this one at the grave of James Perrigo, the last Civil War soldier buried in Lafayette County.

In 1864 at age 16, Perrigo enlisted in the 4th Wisconsin Cavalry which lost 117 men in the war. After the war, Perrigo served as postmaster in South Wayne. He died in 1935 at the age of 87.

Photo courtesy Pat Kulas



Historic Lafayette Church in Walworth County Now Belongs to Camp #15

We are now the proud owners of the Lafayette Church, a historic landmark built in 1855 out on the prairies of Lafayette Township in Walworth County by the first settlers in that part of the country. Last spring, the Wuehrmann family, owners of the church, needed to transfer the property to another tax-exempt 501c non-profit organization and reached out to Bob Koenecke, one of the Camp #15 members who helped restore the church a decade ago.

Working with members of the Wuehrmann family, Brother Bob arranged the transfer of the church's deed to our camp, which is also a 501c organization. And we took over the church free of charge - the Wuehrmann family paid the fees for the deed transfer and title search.

Brothers Bob Koenecke and Pat Kulas began renovating the church in 2010 after Bob, then a lineman for We Energies, spotted the derelict building while making his rounds for the electric company. The church had fallen into disuse by the early 1980s and was taken over by the Wuehrmanns who set up the church as a foundation and also used the church for social events.

Since taking over, we have installed gutters, with Brother Brian McManus paying the \$500 installation cost. Brother Bob has found a used furnace to replace the outdated one, and we are now looking for ideas on how to best use this gift. Shift your brains into high gear, Brothers.

CAMP CHRISTMAS PARTY



What a motley crew these Camp #15 guys are. Not a smile in the bunch. No, I take that back - the two Jerries are smiling, Jerry Coveney and Gerry Drought. Gerry Drought is the really short guy standing in front of Rich Kallan on the left there in the front row. Boy, I



thought *I* was short. Ooops - my bad. A sharp-eyed critic just pointed out that Gerry is not that short, that the editor cut the bottom off his picture. Sorry Gerry. Get the name of that editor!

Look at them smiles. Barb Kallan, Lorraine Keith and Marge Koenecke (back). Lisa Coveney and Ann Daley (front.)



That's **Bob Koenecke** - "Big Bob" - on the far left. Some laughing short guy is next to Bob. **Brian McManus** is in the middle, thinking: Man, I'm full - those cheesy potatoes were great! Brian's nephew, **Andrew Stern**, is to Brian's left. **Sam Keith** has his back to the camera.



Say, how many ornaments are on that tree anyway? asks **Carolyn Wilson**, Jeff Graf's better half. That's **Ruth Gilles**, left and **Marge Koenecke** in the middle, helping count the ornaments. Ruth brought two yummy pies - one a chocolate mint pie - to the party, Marge brought two batches of her famous cheesy potatoes and Carolyn provided tasty porcupine meatballs. As they say in the rural weeklies, a real good time was had by all.



(Above) **Department Chaplain Gerry Drought** on the left is saying: You see what that goldarn camp commander wrote about me being short? And how he cropped that picture so I look about three feet tall? I wanna get some of that monkey powder and present it to him at the next camp meeting!

Nice guy John Gilles in the middle: No, no, Gerry - we gotta save that stuff. We got a lot of smarty-pants guys in this camp that are going to need a good powdering at some point. We gotta *keep our powder dry*.

Chaplain Jerry Coveney on the right: That's right. Plus, see this silver cross on my collar? As camp chaplain, as a man of the cloth, so to speak, I cannot condone such vigilante-type actions. We need to be forgiving.

(Below) On the left, **Big Bob Koenecke** is thinking: Who's this short goof next to me, laughing his hind end off? Some Irish guy, I hear. And a Minnesota Viking fan to boot! How'd he get to be camp commander? I gotta look up that Frenchy word, *coup d'e tat*. We may need to put that word into use real soon...





David K. Miller, who joined the camp in July, showing **Junior Vice Commander Sam Keith** (back to camera) and **Patriotic Instructor Rich Kallan** (far right) how big a Civil War cannon ball is. **Brother Rich** is a little skeptical. “Naww - a cannon ball’s bigger than that,” Rich is saying. Meanwhile, **Tom Hisey** (upper left), another new member, is thinking: Who are these guys? What have I gotten myself into?



Dave: Hey, Sam - got any more of those Moon Pies?



Brian: enjoying the party, enjoying the good fellowship.



Jeff Graf (left): I suppose you’re wondering why I’ve convened this monkey powder board. It seems that a brother is complaining about a lack of charity, right here in the pages of this newsletter, by another brother...



Marge is telling Ruth: So I'm making cheesy potatoes for the party, using only one hand because this one's in a cast. That's really hard to do. Thank God for Bob - he helped stir the bowl.

Bob has his own version of the story: You know how hard it is to stir a bowl for cheesy potatoes with these big paws of mine? I had to help Marge, you know - she's got one hand in a cast. Boy, that cooking and baking - that's a lot of hard work! I'll take chores in the barn any day!



Another picture of five of the grand ladies of Camp #15. Again, they are all smiling. Left to right: **Barb Kallan, Lorraine Keith, Marge Koenecke, Ann Daley and Lisa Coveney.**



Wisconsin Department Commander Jeff Graf, talking to **Andrew Stern**, a nephew to Camp Secretary-Treasurer **Brian McManus**: “Your uncle’s a captain in the Sons of Veterans Reserve, you know,” Jeff says. “So, do you gotta snap off a salute when you see Brian now? Or do you get to pull rank as his nephew?”



Five ladies of Camp #15 discussing the great events of the day. By party’s end, these five had all the world’s problems solved. All right, ladies - we’re all waiting to hear the solutions you’ve come up with...



Camp Guard John Gilless (right), talking to Department Chaplain Gerry Drought (left), and Camp Chaplain Jerry Coveney (across from Brother John): “I know you two chaplains are real proud of the chaplains’ crosses you wear on your uniform collars. But see these crossed signal flags on my left sleeve? Now, guess which insignia outranks the other? Go on, guess.”



Camp Junior Vice Commander Sam Keith, thinking: Hmmm - they must really like the Moon Pies I brought - I’m all out!

2020 Calendar

Feb. 1, 2020 - Wisconsin Department Mid-Winter meeting, 9:30 a.m., Alioto’s Restaurant, Wauwatosa, Wis.; Patriotic Luncheon, 12:30 p.m., Alioto’s.

April 18, 2020 - Lincoln Tomb Ceremony, Springfield, Ill.

June 13, 2020 - Summer Encampment, Clarke Hotel, downtown Waukesha.

Aug. 13-16, 2020 - Nat’l. Encampment Atlanta, Georgia.

Col. Hans C. Heg Camp #15 Newsletter Editor: Dave Daley

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