



Newstetter of Sgt. William Pittenger Camp #21

The General

*Department of
California & Pacific*

Celebrating Ten Years of Service

"Most Outstanding Camp in the Nation" ~ 2003

Volume XI Number 6



*Sons of Union Veterans
of the Civil War*

1995 ~ 2005

"Best Camp Newsletter in the Nation" ~ 2004

"Most Outstanding Brother in the Nation" ~ 2005

Nov 26, 2005

ELECTIONS

Open to All Brothers of Camp 21. Past experience or length of membership are not factors for eligibility.

Elected positions:

1. Camp Commander
2. Senior Vice Cmdr
3. Junior Vice Cmdr
4. Secretary
5. Treasurer
6. Camp Council (3)

You are encouraged to nominate yourself and no second is required. Our Beloved Order will grow through Local Camps & the Local Camp grows when members actively participate. December's meeting is the most important of the year in the life of this Camp. On December 10th, add your voice and strengthen the Pittenger Camp by voting for our Officers for the year 2006 !

A Letter From Our Camp Commander

Dear Camp Brothers,

Words do not come easily to express my feelings. The first is one of honor, that you have seen fit to believe in my vision for the Camp. We've had great success and received 3 National Awards during my term as Commander.

The second is one of Pride. We still lead the Department and the nation as one of the only Camps to hold as many as 40 separate events in a year. We can be proud to be members of one of the most active Camps in the nation, one that continues to be recognized in our Department and in our National Order.

As we begin our 11th year, we have much on which to reflect and much in which to take pride.

This will be my last report as Commander, but I'm not leaving. I look forward to serving Pittenger Camp in any way the new Commander sees fit. I will continue to serve at the Department level and will represent Camp 21 at National Encampment.

We share a great heritage, and seek to honor our Union Ancestors in many ways. Please consider serving your Camp in the coming year. We need new leaders to take us to greater achievements.

As I said in January, it remains your Camp; how it grows and how it goes is up to you. Your participation is how you honor your ancestor. All are welcome - all are needed.

My true feelings are those of thanks. Thank you for your support, your faith in me and your participation. Without your help and support, none of this would have been possible - with it, we have gone far beyond my hopes to achieve more than anyone could have dreamed.

I remain, your Obedient Servant,
In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,

Jerry Sayre
Commander, Camp 21

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THE GENERAL is the official newsletter of the Sgt. William Pittenger Camp 21, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. It is published each odd-numbered month for Camp members. It is also available by newsletter exchange to other SUVCW or Allied Orders groups. Such groups are welcome to reprint articles from *The General* with attribution. Brief articles are invited and should be sent to the Newsletter Editor listed above with the understanding that space limitations may require editing.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS should be mailed to Camp Secretary at address listed above. Failure to notify the Camp of change of address will result in missed issues of *The General* and *The Banner*.

CAMP EMAIL DIRECTORY. If you wish to be included in the Camp Email Directory, send your permission and email address to Bob Lowe at Cavalry21@cox.net.

SONS OF VETERANS RESERVE (SVR) is the uniformed contingent of the SUVCW. You do not have to be a reenactor to join. Annual dues are \$6.00. Interested Brothers should contact the SVR Representative listed above.

Mt. Hope GAR Hill Flagpole Committee Update ~ by John May

The Sgt. William Pittenger Camp has taken on the responsibility of replacing the flagpole atop G.A.R. Hill in Mt. Hope Cemetery. This, the most prominent graveyard in San Diego, contains the remains of somewhere between 600 and 1,000 Union veterans of the Civil War (see the March edition of *The General*). A committee, consisting of Brothers Al Hodges, Bill Howell, Bob Lowe, John May, Ed Moser, John Pollard, Jerry Sayre and Dave Shaffer, was formed to oversee this effort. To date, the committee reports over \$3000 in the project's fund, meeting our initial fund-raising goal. Money has been received from several Camp members and other SUVCW Camps across the nation. It has been particularly heartening to see the display of fraternal support offered by Camps like the U.S. Grant Camp 68 from Missouri or the Charles W. Canney Camp 5 from New Hampshire. A grant of \$500 was awarded the project at the National Encampment in August and several donations have been made in memory of Brother Al Hodges, a committee member who contributed much to the project before passing away in September. During the June Camp meeting, the membership unanimously passed a motion to have the Camp donate \$500 from our own treasury to the project. The committee has had five meetings, the first taking place directly before the Camp meeting in April. While much had been learned about the logistics of replacing a flagpole, mostly through the efforts of Brother Bob Lowe, it was decided at the time to focus our attention strictly on fund raising. To that end, the committee met again on April 14 to inspect the site at Mt. Hope Cemetery. The full cooperation and support of the cemetery was graciously provided by the manager of Mt. Hope, Mr. David Lugo. Brother Will Tisch produced a brochure that has been reproduced and distributed to potential donors. A third meeting was held directly after the Memorial Day service at Sgt. Pittenger's gravesite in Fallbrook. Strategies for fund-raising were discussed and each member of the committee was assigned a list of contacts. After meeting on October 22, the committee has determined to direct its efforts toward the purchase of an appropriate flagpole and to have a dedicatory brass plaque manufactured. The committee is working with the Seaman-Poe Monument Company of San Diego who will coordinate the installation of both the flagpole and the plaque. Our Camp is looking at a projected replacement date of July 4, 2006—exactly fifty years from the dedication of the G.A.R. Monument that lies directly in front of where the flagpole will be erected. It is hoped that all Camp Brothers, their families, the local Civil War community, members of the press and the public will be in attendance at the dedication ceremony. If you would like to become part of this committee, please contact Camp Secretary John May. Any and all donations will be gratefully accepted and Brothers who have friends and business contacts are urged to either, 1) contact them directly for a tax-deductible donation or, 2) pass the name of potential donors on to a member of the committee.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING, 22 October 2005

Present: Brothers Dave Allyn, Ed Berger, Stephen Berrey, George Cavanagh, John Finch, Tom Helmantoler, Gary Henson, Bob Lowe, John May, Monroe McBride, Colin McKim, Deane Poole, Ernie Powell, Jerry Sayre, Dave Shaffer, Will Tisch, and guests Gay Allyn, Julie Atzen, Muriel Baron, Brenda Boucher, Cindy Hodges, Rosemary Lowe, Linda McKim, Kim Sayre, Jan Shaffer and Cmdr. Steve Smith, SCV.

The meeting was called to order by Commander Jerry Sayre at 4:30PM at the Staff N.C.O. Club, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, San Diego, California. The formal opening ceremony was observed as found in the Sons Ritual Manual, with Brothers following scripted responses. JVC E. Powell reported no new members. A motion to approve the minutes of the June meeting (Helmantoler/Lowe) as printed in the newsletter was passed. Cmdr. Steve Smith, Fr. A.J. Ryan Camp, SCV was introduced as a guest of honor. Sec. J. May reported no new correspondance. Treas. J. May reported that since our last meeting, the Camp has spent \$896.69 and has income of \$1175.00. Our current balance is \$3933.54 of which \$3074.00 is in our Flagpole Project Fund. The Flagpole Committee reports that they have met the initial fund-raising goal and are now researching the different types of flagpoles available. The Camp is working with the Seaman-Poe Monument Company of San Diego to coordinate the removal of the old flagpole base, the site inspection, the purchase and installation of the new flagpole, and the manufacture and installation of a commemorative plaque. Dedication date for the new flagpole is tentatively scheduled for July 4, 2006---fifty years from the dedication of the G.A.R. Monument, which sits directly behind the site of the new flagpole. SVC W. Tisch reported on; 1) participation of the color guard at the Tustin Tiller Days parade on Oct. 1 with the addition of two new SVR members (all Brothers are urged to become members of the SVR), 2) participation at the VMMC memorial on Sept. 24 where the names of service men and women who have died as well as veterans who have died the previous month were read by members of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Assn., 3) Massing of the Colors coming up on Nov. 6 at 10:30 AM at the Organ Pavilion in Balboa Park (all urged to attend), 4) Veterans' Day Parade and memorial dedication coming up at Balboa Park on Nov. 11, 5) the Mother Goose Parade coming up on Nov. 20, 6) the upcoming

Nov. 26 VMMC memorial at which we will be presenting the colors and a flag will be presented to Cindy Hodges in recognition of deceased Brother Al Hodges' participation in the color guard, 7) the upcoming Fallbrook Christmas Parade which will take place in the evening of Dec. 3, 8) the upcoming celebration of a "Civil War Christmas" at the Drum Barracks in Wilmington, and 9) the next Camp meeting on Dec. 10 at which elections of next year's officers will take place. J. Sayre reported that Remembrance Day will be observed at noon on Nov. 19 at the Pittenger gravesite and that the previous Saturday, Nov. 12 is a scheduled cleanup day at the Odd Fellows Cemetery. All brothers are encouraged to attend both events. Also announced are the dates for the next Department Encampment---March 24-25 in Las Vegas. No Old Business was discussed. New Business items: 1) Cmdr. Steve Smith, SCV, reported that a dedication of a Union and a Confederate grave at the Nuevo Gardens Cemetery in Ramona is planned. The Camp is asked to participate to make this a joint SUVCW/SCV event. Cmdr. Smith will plan the event, tentatively scheduled for Feb. 25, 2006 and will send us the name of the Union veteran ahead of time. J. Sayre will coordinate our participation. 2) D. Allyn mentioned that thanks to the efforts of W. Tisch, the SVR newsletter, The Western Dispatch, is posted on the National website as an example for other units to follow. 3) Those interested in membership in MOL-LUS should contact B. Lowe. Nominations for next year's officers: SVC W. Tisch was nominated for Commander by B. Lowe. Nominations will remain open until next Camp meeting.

A raffle was conducted by W. Tisch. Winners included Julie Atzen, who won twice, Bob Lowe, Steve Smith, Colin McKim, Stephen Berrey, and Kim Sayre. A total of \$66 was raised. The speaker, Muriel Baron, was introduced by T. Helmantoler. She proceeded to speak about her grandfather, Frederick Christian Hess of the 104th Ill. Vol. Infantry, and the 130 letters that she possesses written to his wife during the course of his Civil War service. T. Helmantoler presented Mrs. Baron with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Camp and W. Tisch led the assembled in "three cheers for the 104th Illinois." The formal closing ceremony concluded the meeting, which was adjourned at 6:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted, John May, Secretary

“My Union Ancestors,” ~ by John May

My great-great grandfather, Thomas Downey, was born in Ireland in 1822. His first son, Thomas, Jr. came along in 1845. The family immigrated to the United States in 1847, victims of the potato famine that brought almost four million Irish to America. Thomas and his wife, Brigid, settled in Boston, MA. where he took up work as a teamster and began to raise their seven children. Times were tough for a poor man with a large family and discrimination, both socially and economically, against the Irish was rampant. When the Civil War arrived, Thomas, now 42 years old, decided to serve his adopted country. He enlisted as a 42 year-old private in the 3rd Massachusetts Light Artillery, where his skill in working with horses could be utilized. For volunteering, Thomas was awarded a bounty from the State and the City of Boston that totaled \$325---probably quite a windfall for the Downey family! Thomas signed up for a three-year enlistment and was mustered in on January 16, 1864. A month later, much of the 3rd Massachusetts Light Artillery, Thomas Downey included, was transferred to the battle-hardened 5th Massachusetts Light Artillery, who needed to replace the losses suffered in the previous year's campaigns at Fredricksburg, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg. The battery, attached to the 5th Corps, Army of the Potomac, was encamped for the winter at Rappahannock Station. At about this time, with his father down in northern Virginia, young Thomas, Jr. walked into the recruiting office in Boston with a forged note from his mother allowing him to enlist in the Union cause at age 17. Family tradition does not say whether or not Thomas, Sr. was aware of his son's enlistment, but it is definite that mother Brigid

was livid! By the time Thomas, Jr. was mustered in however, in May of 1864, the need for replacement troops was not as severe and he was assigned to the 4th Unattached Company of the Massachusetts Infantry. This company of about 100 boys spent the remainder of their enlistment in comparatively light garrison duty at Fort Clark's Point in New Bedford, MA. On May 4, 1864, Thomas, Sr. and the rest of the 5th Mass. Light Artillery crossed the Rapidan River and saw action in the Wilderness. The following week, the battery saw action on the Union right at Spottsylvania and by early June was fighting at Bethesda Church, where six men were killed and several wounded. Interestingly, battle reports of the time seem to emphasize the heavy loss of horses more so than the loss of fighting men. The effectiveness of artillery depended upon its ability to be properly placed at the onset of battle and to be rapidly repositioned during the course of battle. Without horses, a battery did not have the needed mobility to be an effective fighting unit. The entire battery spent the late summer and early fall on the eastern front at the siege of Pettersburg. The winter of 1864-65 saw the battery take part in several movements and the general assault on Pettersburg took place on April 2, with the battery heavily engaged. This proved to be the last action that Thomas would see. The battery marched north to the Washington defenses, where it remained for about a month, then the entire unit took the train back to Boston where it was finally mustered out of United States service on June 12th. Thomas, Sr. returned to his life as a teamster, probably the equivalent of what people today do with a truck who advertise that they will

Schedule of Coming Events/Activities	* denotes Co. G. 5th Calif. Infantry. SVR participation	Contact for details
*Christmas Parade, Fallbrook, CA.	6:00 PM, December 3, 2005	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
"Victorian Christmas," Drum Barracks, Wilmington, CA.	December 3-4, 2005	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
Camp Meeting/Election of Officers, SNCO Club, MCAS Miramar	4:30 PM, December 10, 2005	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
*Memorial Service, VMMC, San Diego, CA.	11:00 AM, January 28, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
**"Lincoln Pilgrimage", Redlands, CA.	9:30 AM, February 11, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
Regular Camp meeting, SNCO Club, MCAS Miramar	4:30 PM, February 11, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
*Massing of Colors, Forest Lawn, Burbank, CA.	2:00 PM, February 19, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
*Dedication of CW Veterans Headstones, Ramona, CA.	10:00 AM, February 25, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
Annual Dept. of Calif. & Pac. Encampment, Las Vegas, NV.	25-26 March, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch
CW Reenactment, Prado Park, CA.	April 1-2, 2006	Jerry Sayre, Will Tisch

"My Union Ancestors," ~ by John May (Cont)



FOR SALE, TENTH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE MEDALS

The beautiful medals feature the face of Medal of Honor Recipient and Camp 21 Namesake, Sgt. William Pittenger with a Stars & Stripes Ribbon. Donated for fundraising by Camp Commander, Jerry Sayre, and available from Secretary John May for \$10.00 each.



The San Diego Civil War Roundtable meets the Third Wednesday of each month 7 PM at the John D. Spreckles Masonic Lodge, 3858 Front St, San Diego and is open to the public. For further information, contact President Dave Tooley at 858/672-2593 on the Web at sdcwrt.org

"haul anything, anywhere." He joined the Maj. G. L. Stearns Post #149 of the Grand Army of the Republic, which was the only local post that actively encouraged Irish membership. He lived out the rest of his days in-and-around the Boston area. His funeral in 1896 was attended by his G.A.R. brothers and a G.A.R. marker was placed by his headstone. Meanwhile, Tom, Jr. took on a series of jobs, finally settling with the emerging newspaper, The Boston Globe. He worked for the Globe for forty years, eventually rising to Circulation Editor. He raised five children in nearby Charleston, was inducted into the Abraham Lincoln Post #11 of the G.A.R. Interestingly, he was admitted to this post in spite of his Irish roots. Presumably, having lived most of his life in America, Thomas Jr. did not have an accent nor did he dress any differently than his fellow citizens. He became heavily involved in local politics and Church activities. His obituary, in 1924, was carried on the front page of the paper to whom he so loyally devoted his career. Tom, Jr.'s youngest son, Joe, was born in 1900 when Tom was 55 years old! Joe Downey, my grandfather, was an avid Civil War buff and amateur historian. As a small boy, I went with my grandfather on several excursions to Civil War battle sites, looking for landmarks spoken of by Thomas Sr. and for monuments erected to his units. This is how my interest in history was first aroused and for this I owe my Grandpa Joe a great deal of gratitude. Upon talking to my aunt, I recently found out that Joe, in 1942, had emulated his grandfather by enlisting in the United States Army at age 42! He became, not coincidentally, an artilleryman, and was heard to remark at the time, "Never let it be said that a Downey had to be drafted to do his duty."

So — what did YOU do over the weekend? Bob & Rosemary Lowe visited Gettysburg for the annual Nov. 19th **Remembrance Day Parade**, Blue-Gray Ball, & SVR Breakfast Meeting. In spite of the hectic pace, they managed to do a little sight-seeing on the Battlefield. While there, Bob placed flowers at several Regimental Monuments in memory and honor of ancestors. At Right, Bob with some of the estimated 2,000 parade participants. Below Left, at the Ball (Is that a new



dress, Rosemary?) At Right, up on Little Round Top. It was mighty cold but at least the sun shined for them. We're very glad you made it there and back, in one piece!
Welcome Home, Kids!



OUR NEXT CAMP MEETING (Note Time)

DEC 10 2005 - 4:30 PM

Meeting Location

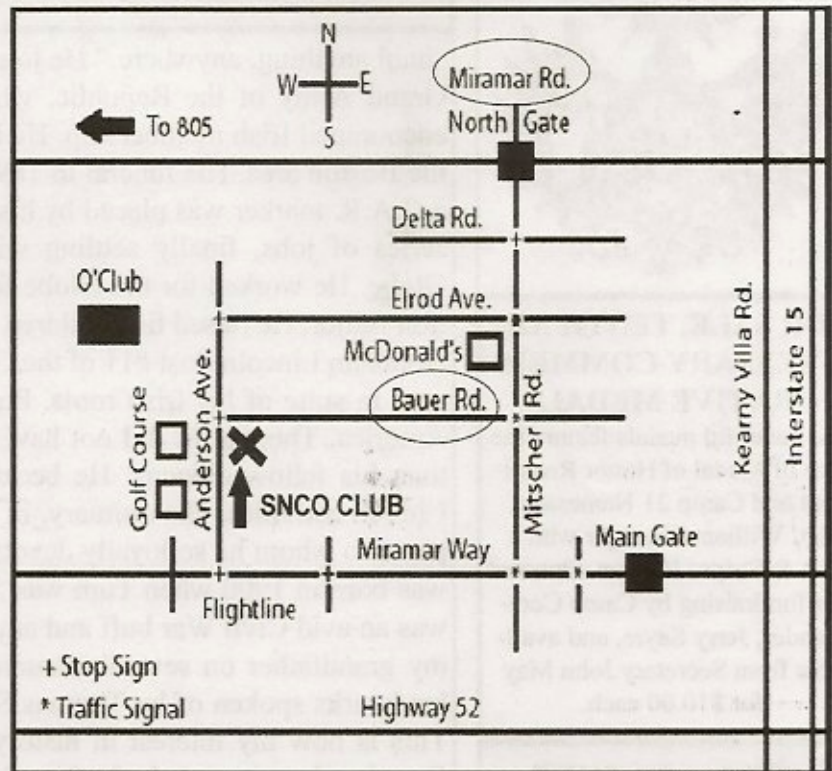
**Staff NCO Club
MCAS Miramar**

DIRECTIONS

From the 15 Freeway, enter the **Main Gate** (end of Miramar Way) or the **North Gate** (off Miramar Road). From the 805 Freeway, enter the **North Gate**. Have ID & Proof of Insurance ready - tell the Sentry you are attending the SUVCW meeting at the Staff NCO Club. Refer to Map at Right →

Our Speaker

Due to elections and installation of 2006 Camp Officers, we will not have a speaker. Everyone is encouraged to bring spouses/guests.



The General

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SAN DIEGO CA 921

28 NOV 05PM 8



Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Season's Greetings & Happy New Year to Our Brothers and Families