



# Hartranft Herald

The Newsletter of  
**Maj. Gen. John F. Hartranft Camp No. 15**  
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

[Http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html](http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html)



**Volume 9, No. one**

**January 2007**



--- **A Blessed New Year to you and yours** ---

A newsletter for, about, and by the members of Camp 15 and Auxiliary 7. Ladies and Brothers, and Family and Friends, are welcome to our meetings at the National Civil War Museum and field trips at-large -- Bring your camera.

## [News Corner](#)

Camp 15's next general meeting is scheduled for **2 pm, Sunday, January 21, 2007** at the National Civil War Museum. Please mark your social calendar, update outlook, or at least give Camp 15's schedule to your wife to keep track of Camp 15 activities for you to participate!

## [Brothers in Distress](#)

Sister Kate Sienerth of auxiliary 7 to Camp 15 is in the mist of a head cold.

Frank Haley makes this report on the progress of his tumor:

Hi, we are doing fine. Had an MRI on Monday, & the tumor is shrinking very well. Dr said it looked normal, but wants (me) to have another Chemo (treatment) Monday just to be sure! I can tell a big difference in lots of things that bothered me before. Something is working well. I'll be in the hospital for 3 or 4 days again.

Frank can be reached at: [Pvi83rd@aol.com](mailto:Pvi83rd@aol.com)

## [Commander's Corner](#) – Donnie Prye

Greetings and Happy New Year! I hope this year finds all of our brothers and sisters and their families in good health. Please continue prayers for those who hit a few bumps in the road during the past year.



I apologize for the lack of a Commander's report for the December issue of your *Hartranft Herald*. I was sure there would not be a newsletter for December; as it turned out, it was another organization that I am a member that skips news for December.

I hope all of you have marked your calendars with meeting and activity dates for 2007. There will be a few additional activities to be added to our schedule, with details and dates to be announced later. See you at our meeting Sunday the 21<sup>st</sup>.

--- Donnie

I ENJOYED READING (THE *HARTRANFT HERALD*) AND LOOKING AT THE PICTURES, TOO. THANK YOU AGAIN, (FOR SHARING YOUR NEW ANNUAL CALENDAR WITH US). --- ANN.

## Junior Vice Commander Corner

Dear Camp #15 Brothers,

I've had the pleasure of communicating with two other camps in early December. David Berezovske, Commander of James Garfield Camp #34 based in the Mt Carmel area, informs me that the camp is awaiting the result of a renewed application for the Medal of Honor to be awarded to the living descendants of Henry "Snapper" Reese, who lit (or relit) the fuse that ignited the mine at the Battle of the Crater. Reese was recommended for the Medal during his lifetime, but for reasons too lengthy to explain here, the Medal was never awarded. Reese is buried in Shamokin, and his twin great-granddaughters live there today.

Cloyd "Bill" Wagner of Snyder County is one of four remaining members of the now-dormant Henry K. Ritter Camp #65 based in McClure. Bill and I have been friends for years, and the rather sad state of Camp #65 is a warning to all camps. Bill tells me that, a few years ago, 40% of the camp members died, their average age being 91. An effort was made to revitalize the camp with members from a Union living history unit, but when that unit disbanded, Camp #65 was left with little choice but to go into "hibernation."



In my weekly column in ***The Daily Item***, a newspaper serving central Pennsylvania, I encouraged local readers who might be interested in SUVCW membership to either visit the [www.suvcw.org](http://www.suvcw.org) website and download an application, or to

contact me and I would assist them. It's too soon to tell if the article will have any effect, but I will certainly keep everyone posted.

Warmest regards and best wishes,  
John Deppen  
Junior Vice Commander  
General John F. Hartranft Camp #15, SUVCW

Editor's Note: herewith is one of Brother John's recent articles posted in December in *The Daily Item* newspaper:

On Sunday, December 10, I had the honor of being installed as the junior vice commander of General John F. Hartranft Camp #15 of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. Named in honor of one of Pennsylvania's Civil War Medal of Honor recipients, Camp #15 is but one part of a larger fraternal organization that was formed 125 years ago to carry on the traditions of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War – originally called the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America – was created by members of the Grand Army of the Republic in 1881. The GAR, made up of thousands of Union veterans, was one of the most influential organizations in America during the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The GAR championed the cause of Union veterans, fighting for jobs, pensions, and proper recognition for those who defended the Republic from 1861 until 1865.

The members of the GAR knew that one day, when all the boys in blue were gone; the organization would cease to exist. The creation of the SUVCW was intended to perpetuate their memory. According to the official website of the SUVCW, "Membership was open to any man who could prove ancestry to a member of the GAR or to a veteran eligible for membership in the GAR. In later years, men who did not have the ancestry to qualify for hereditary membership, but who demonstrated a genuine interest in the Civil War and could subscribe to the purpose and objectives of the SUVCW, were admitted as Associates. This practice continues today."

My own eligibility for membership in the SUVCW comes from my relationship to Christian Romig. Romig, my great-great-great uncle, joined the 1<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Cavalry in 1861 and rose to the rank of sergeant in Company C. On June 9, 1863, Sgt. Romig was killed in action at the Battle of Brandy Station, the largest cavalry engagement of the war. Romig's sister Hannah was my great-great grandmother.

The SUVCW instills in its members an appreciation of fraternity, charity, and loyalty. The organization actively supports the preservation of America's Civil War heritage. At a ceremony commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GAR Memorial at Gettysburg National Military Park in August 2006, SUVCW officers presented a donation of \$500 for each of the three monuments that were heavily damaged by vandals several months ago. Each year prior to Memorial Day, members of Camp #15 help to decorate the graves of Union veterans in the Harrisburg area.

For residents of the Susquehanna Valley interested in pursuing membership in the SUVCW, the best resource to consult is the organization's website at [www.suvcw.org](http://www.suvcw.org). An application form can be printed directly from the website. As junior vice commander of Camp #15, membership and recruitment are part of my duties, and I will gladly assist potential members with questions.

While Camp #15 is based in the Harrisburg area, James Garfield Camp #34 is based in the Mt. Carmel area and is also an active group, commanded by David Berezovske. Henry K. Ritter Camp #65 once met in McClure, but is currently dormant due to a lack of members.

The Autumn 2006 issue of *The Banner*, the official journal of the SUVCW, reported that there are presently 6,029 "brothers in Good Standing" within the organization. For the sake of the memory of our ancestors who donned a blue uniform and shouldered a rifle, I hope to see that number grow in the coming years. – John Deppen.

[Send a post card to a GI in Iraq – it's free!](#)

**Something great that Xerox Company is doing!**

Go to this web site, [www.letsavthanks.com](http://www.letsavthanks.com) ! You can pick out a thank you card and Xerox will print it and it will be sent to a soldier that is currently serving in Iraq. You can't select who receives it, but it will go to some member of the armed services.

**Please send a card.**

**It is FREE and it only takes a few seconds.**

[Are your 2007 dues late?](#)



Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War General John F. Hartranft Camp #15 dues were due by January 1, 2007. They are now LATE if you have not paid them. Please mail the **TWENTY-FIVE** dollars to

our new camp treasurer; Make your remittance payable to **General John F. Hartranft Camp 15**. Treasurer's mailing address is:

Mr. David W. Demmy, Sr.  
Treasurer, Camp 15 SUVCW  
881 Sunny Hill Lane  
Harrisburg, PA 17111-4690  
[DoubleD@Demmy.cc](mailto:DoubleD@Demmy.cc)

Save yourself the postage, and bring your dues remittance to the meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup>.

Check preferred but Camp accepts cash too!

Thank you and a happy new year!

Larry Sheibley, PCC, Secretary

### [Photos from the Past](#)

National Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War website offers you the opportunity to post your Civil War ancestor(s) photo (and story) on our National website:

The [Photos from the Past](#) web page was initiated by Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) Past Commander-in-Chief [Keith G. Harrison](#), then National Webmaster, in February 1998, as a means for the members of the SUVCW and other Allied Orders of the Grand Army of the Republic, and the general public to honor and preserve the memory of the men who preserved the Union 1861 - 1865. Since then, the popularity of the page and the number of veterans listed have continued to grow.

Anyone who has photographs of their Civil War ancestor either during the Civil War or after, or photographs relating to the post Civil War veterans' organization, the Grand Army of the Republic, is welcomed to electronically submit them along with accompanying identification to the [Backup National SUVCW Webmaster](#) for inclusion on this page.

Important Notice: Large graphics (photograph) bitmap (bmp) files (100,000 bytes and larger) CANNOT BE ACCEPTED as they monopolize the recipient's email program in terms of downloading. If you have a large bmp file, you will need to obtain access to a graphics program and first reduce the size of the file and then save (convert) it to a jpg or gif format before sending. Your graphics file that you submit should not be any larger than 30,000 bytes.

## [Member's Corner](#) - for and about our members



ELIZABETH AND MARY

This photo was taken on December 24th. Happy New Year to you and may God bless your life. Peace and Love,  
Mandy and Donald Butler, Tucson, Arizona.

The following is from The Bugles Blast Christmas Edition (The newsletter of the Wyoming Valley Civil War Round Table, based in Dallas, PA) -

*It CAN Happen Here - It HAS Happened There -*

*In this season we often hear the tale of How The Grinch Stole Christmas - here is a story of how a CWRT can face a crisis, which proves my thesis that unless you are constantly growing - you can easily be 'slowing.' The Old Baldy CWRT of Philadelphia finds itself in a crisis. Its newsletter editorializes on how membership has dropped severely in the last 3-4 years from over 100 to a present 53 and an expected membership of under 40 in 2007. Several recent meetings drew only 10 or so members - and they have what appear to be super programs.*

*The Board of Directors have considered dissolving the group and at a recent meeting one hour prior to the program was set aside to allow all members to express themselves. This article is under the signature of the president, who states he is the only remaining founding member as well.*

*The moral is very plain - Even a large group in a heavy population area cannot run on "idle" but must work to replace and increase the membership. Some key words are participation and membership*

*growth. This is something for us, and for all groups, to learn from!*

Camp #15 and the SUVCW as a whole need to heed this warning as well.

Yours in Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty,  
John Deppen, Junior Vice Commander, Camp #15.

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## [Patriotic Instructor / GAR Historian](#)

by Dave Klinepeter

We the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) need to be reminded about our FATHER organization. In the next several issues I will be updating my article of the June 2002 issue of the Hartranft Herald pertaining to the History of the Grand Army of the Republic. I realize some newer members may not be familiar with the Civil War Veterans organizations after the war in 1865. They are the only reason, we, the Sons of Union Veterans and Allied Organizations exist.

I am also working on a series of articles, about John H. Runkle, Mr. SUV of Harrisburg Pa for many years and also about Hartranft Camp 15 Fife and Drum Corp, which he organized in the 1920s period. Dates to remember:

Feb 12th Lincolns birthday

Feb 14 Valentine Day

Feb 14th, 1859 Oregon admitted to the Union 33rd state

Feb 14th, 1912 Arizona admitted to the Union 48th state

Feb 15th, 1898 Battleship Maine was blown up in Havana harbor Cuba

Feb 22nd George Washington birthday Father of our country;

And on, Feb 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1861, Abraham Lincoln boarded a special train in Philadelphia for Harrisburg, on his way to Washington D. C. Washington's birthday was always a time of celebration in the Capital City and Lincoln's appearance added to the festivities. The city was decorated with flags and banners, and a beautiful arch had been erected on the side walk opposite one of the Market Square entrances of the Jones House. Bands from the neighboring communities had gathered, and



even before the arrival of the President-elect, a parade of military and civic groups had traversed the streets to the Capital. A new flag was raised to the dome of the Capital by the Old Soldiers of the War of 1812. The streets were crowded with spectators. Lincoln was escorted in an elegant barouche drawn by six stately gray horses to the Jones house where he was welcomed by Governor Andrew Curtin. (That must have been a *sight to behold*) - DJK.

[GAR series](#) by David J. Klinepeter

## THE [G](#)RAND [A](#)RM<sup>Y</sup> OF THE [R](#)EPUBLIC

The founding of the Grand Army of the Republic on April 6, 1866 in Decatur, Illinois was credited to Major Benjamin F. Stephenson, a Surgeon, who had served with the 14<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry. A meeting was held on July 12, 1866 at Springfield, Illinois and was attended by delegates from ten states and one district. (Pennsylvania was one of those states). A number of resolutions were presented and adopted, thus forming what would officially become known as the Grand Army of the Republic. The badge shown below was the first official badge of the Grand Army of the Republic. It was in use from 1866 to 1869.



Rules and Regulations for the government of the Grand Army of the Republic as revised and adopted in the National Encampment at Washington D. C. May 11 and 12, 1870

We, soldiers and sailors, and honorable-discharged soldiers and sailors, of the Army Navy and Marine Corps of the United States, who have consented to this union, having aided in maintaining the honor, integrity, and supremacy of the National Government during the late rebellion, do unite to establish a permanent association for the objects hereinafter set forth; and through our National Encampment, do ordain and establish the following Rules and Regulations for the government of this association.

### Article 1 Title

This association shall be known as the Grand Army of the Republic

### Article 2 Objects

The objects to be accomplished by this organization are as follows:

1. To preserve and strengthen those kind and fraternal feelings which bind together the soldiers, sailors, marines who united to suppress the late rebellion.

2. To assist such former comrades in arms as need help and protection; and to extend needful aid to the widows and orphans of those who have fallen!

3. To maintain true allegiance to the United States of America, based upon a paramount respect for the fidelity to the National Constitution and laws; to discountenance whatever tends to weaken loyalty, incites to insurrection, treason, or rebellion, or in any manner impairs the efficiency and permanency of our free institutions; and to encourage the spread of universal liberty, equal rights, and justice to all men. To be continued. To view previous articles on GAR badges, go to our website [Http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html](http://www.geocities.com/hartranft15/HartranftHerald.html) and in the Table of Contents select Special Stories! -- Dave.

### [Draping your membership badge](#)

In remembrance of President Gerald Ford Brothers,

Commander in Chief Pahl has issued General Orders #7 which requires that all Charters be draped for a period of 30 days beginning 29 December 06. This also includes the national website and individual Brothers' membership badge. In F, C, & L, Lee Walters, CDR, PA State Department

### Editor's Note:

Regulations reveal that we wear a 1 inch black grosgrain band around our badge. Grosgrain is not easy to find. Your *Hartranft Herald* will have grosgrain ribbon for you to drape your badge at our meeting next week. Please come early to drape your badge well before the meeting begins at 2 pm.

--- Your *Hartranft Herald* staff.

THE  
NEW ENGLAND MAGAZINE.

NEW SERIES.

AUGUST, 1890.

VOL. II. No. 6.

THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

*By Major George S. Merrill,  
Past Commander-in-Chief.*

THE gathering of a mighty host of veterans of the late war is a fitting occasion to revert to the rise and growth of that great organization, with a membership comprising nearly half a million of the men who, on land or sea, were of the nation's defenders from 1861 to 1865 — the Grand Army of the Republic, the one veteran organization opening its doors to the soldiers of every army and the sailors from every battle-ship, including on equal terms the officer who wore the stars and the private whose only badge of distinction was that he carried a musket in the ranks and wore the blue of the Union. Do any "reason why"? The organization itself affords the best reply. No such membership could have been gathered and knit together, growing alike in numbers and unity of heart and purpose with the years, unless its principles and purposes were worthy the approval of patriotic men. With its simple yet comprehensive watchwords of "Fraternity, Charity, Loyalty," it has successfully sought to form a brotherhood of loyal men, to cement the comradeship born of battle, to care for the widow, the orphan, and the disabled, to treasure the story of the uprising, the combat, and the victory, and to inculcate lessons of loyalty.

A short time before the proceedings incident to the last Memorial Day, a veteran of the war against rebellion chanced to meet a friend, an intelligent young business man of thirty-eight years of age. Speaking of the coming ceremonies, the young man remarked that he was to a large degree ignorant as to the events of

the late war; he was but seven years of age when the contest began and eleven at its conclusion, too young to remember much as to its cause or character; during his school days the histories, of course, had little or no information concerning the great struggle then just ended, and while through his studies he became familiar with the wars of other times and peoples, and with the story of our own Revolutionary and Mexican wars, he must regretfully confess practical ignorance as to the later and larger combat. Just here the Grand Army of the Republic has had a mission. By the force of its numbers, its public gatherings, its camp fires, and more especially through the tender services of Memorial Day, it has awakened the interest of the people, particularly of the generation growing to manhood and womanhood, enlarged their channels of information and stimulated loyal sentiment.

With the lapse of but a quarter of a century it appears singular, and yet considering the haziness surrounding the history of even important events of the war it is not so strange, that the story of the early days of the Grand Army of the Republic is clouded in doubt, and no little of the detail has been lost. Certain it is that before their term of service was ended, the warmth of association therein led the veterans to consider the question of continuing the comradeship, and at least two organizations, which have continued since, were formed, — the Third Corps Union and the Society of the Army of the Tennessee. Quite generally, also, among the Union prisoners in the South secret bands were

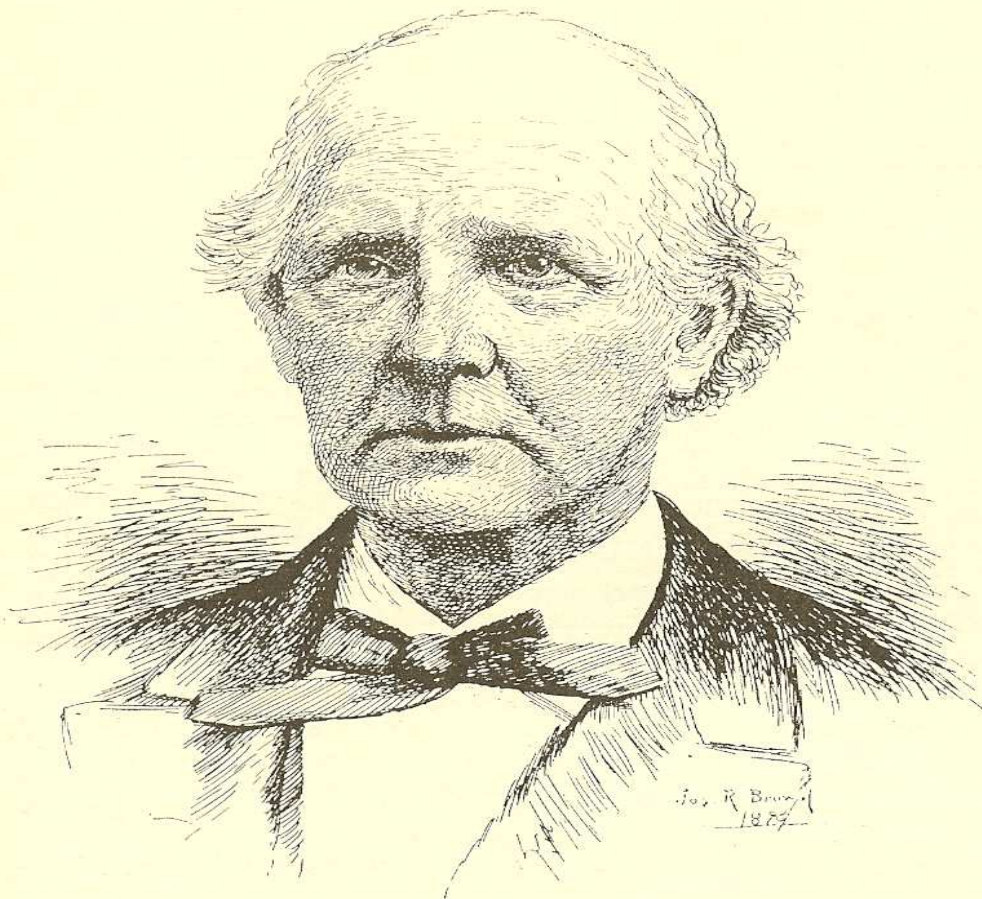


formed for mutual protection and for aiding escape. Some of these had signs and passwords and a form of initiation, and it is not unlikely that herein was the germ of the original ritual and muster-in service of the early Grand Army. There is no com-

peace there came the presence of disabled veterans, suffering families, and distressed homes. The aid to these came cheerfully, but without organization, and the frequency of the calls speedily awakened the sense that something in the line of systematized

effort was not only desirable but imperative. All over the North sprang up veteran associations with varying plans, although generally united in a common purpose of rendering assistance to those in need, who had dared the danger and shared the conflict.

The country was agitated over the questions of reconstruction; the conciliatory feeling so general at the immediate time of the close of the war had been sadly smitten by the assassination of President Lincoln, and political parties were torn by the disruption between President Johnson and his party. Fresh from their efforts and sacrifices to maintain the Union, the veterans quite naturally entered warmly into consideration of the



General S. A. Hurlbut,

FIRST COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC.

radeship quite like that born of danger, awakened by common peril, strengthened by toil and privation, knit by the touch of elbow in the weary march or the dash of battle. True, when the great army came joyously home, its standards torn and begrimed, yet resplendent with victory, the veterans put aside their well-worn suits of blue, bade good by to army associations, and took up anew the peaceful avocations they had laid down four years before, with little thought or purpose of further association as comrades of the flag. But into the earliest hour of well-won

questions affecting the nation's future, and purely political clubs under the name of the "Boys in Blue" and kindred designations were formed all over the North. In the midst of this strife and bitterness, though not as a part of it, the Grand Army of the Republic had its birth. Little wonder that it was associated in the minds of the public with somewhat kindred associations where politics dominated, or that in some locations the members found it difficult to absolutely discriminate between their duties as members of the organization and their rights and privileges as citizens of the

## Camp 15's Calendar of Events for 2007

January – Sunday 21st	General Meeting.
February – Sunday 18th	General Meeting.
March - Sunday 18th	General Meeting.
April – Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting.
May – Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting.
May – Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Memorial Day outing at Harrisburg Cemetery. Placing flags upon veterans' gravesites.
June	<i>No general meeting.</i>
June 21 <sup>st</sup> – 22nd – 23rd	127th Annual Pennsylvania State Department Encampment (convention) at Bethlehem.
July – Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Camp Picnic.
August 9 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> – 11 <sup>th</sup>	126 <sup>th</sup> National Encampment (convention).
September – Sunday 16 <sup>th</sup>	General Meeting.
October – Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	General Meeting.
November	<i>No general meeting.</i>
November – Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Remembrance Day at Gettysburg.
December – Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Annual Holiday Party at Doc Holliday's New Cumberland

## Allied Orders of the GAR

- Woman's Relief Corps Auxiliary to Grand Army of the Republic,
- Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic,
- Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War,
- Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, and
- Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.



## Looking Ahead into February:

- Next General Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 18, 2007.
- Membership Bios will continue to appear in your 2007 *Hartranft Herald*.
- Have you submitted your BIO! Why not begin work on it today!
- Keep a copy of your schedule of events and calendar handy for reference.

## *Wear The Badge*



In Fraternity, Charity, and Loyalty

--- End of January 2007 *Hartranft Herald* ---

