

Camp Commander David H. McReynolds called the monthly mess meeting of Major William A. McTeer Camp 39 to order at Calhoun's Restaurant in Maryville on Tuesday, 12 May 2015, at 1210 hours.

Attendance included Bros. McReynolds (CC), Mike Downs (DC) Doug Fidler (CS, PCC, PDC), Bob Wallace (CT), Craig Brown (PCC, PDC), Sam Wilson, and one of our newest members, Richard Holmes. Also present as a guest of Bro. Brown was Gena Tussey of Station House Photography, who briefed them about her photographic services.

1. The Commander began by expressing his appreciation for all the hard work required to organize and execute the commemoration of the sesquicentennial of the explosion and destruction of the *SS Sultana*. He also noted the solid support of the Brothers through their attendance, as well as the estimated 150 people who attended. He estimated that 25 percent of the attendees were descendants of veterans on the *Sultana* that day.

2. The Commander began with a discussion about the need for a Memorial Day Ceremony, even if it on a small scale. It was suggested that the Brothers should meet at the grave of our camp's namesake, Major Will McTeer, who is buried high on the hill of Magnolia Cemetery, opposite the Maryville City Hall. This was acceptable, as honoring him was seen as honoring the approximate 1200 soldiers of both sides that are buried throughout Blount County. Two dates were considered: the "legal" holiday (25 May) and the traditional holiday (30 May). The Brothers were amenable to either date, but eventually settled on the latter as it supported one of the goals of the Order and was on a Saturday. It was thought that a Saturday might attract more local people, especially members, who might be busy with other activities on the holiday. The time of 1030 hours was arrived at because of the higher temperatures that are experienced at the end of May. The commander requested that those who would like to volunteer in some capacity should contact him ASAP.

3. The Commander next requested that the membership consider the need to purchase some items that will significantly improve the public image of the Camp when members attend events in the local area. These include a backdrop for the tent, an attractive table cloth, and a full-size camp flag, with flag pole and stand. They fully concurred with this need, agreeing that the next step would be to research the cost of the various items and to review the treasurer's report for sufficient funds. The Camp Treasurer was asked and he supported the availability of funds that would make this project viable. The Camp Secretary agreed, but advised him that there had been checks sent with the Annual Camp Report and several checks had been deposited in the previous week that had changed the balance. While others would estimate the cost of the items, the Secretary would provide the figures to the Treasurer so he could provide an up-to-date balance to the Commander.

4. The Commander provided a calendar of upcoming events that is attached to the minutes. His goal is for the Camp to be present in the community as often as possible without "overwhelming" the membership with activities, stressing the importance of greater support from Brothers in the greater Blount/Knox Counties.

- The Memorial Day ceremony at the end of the month is in the very near future, but the ETHS History Day in Knoxville on 15 August is one that is growing every year and will remain very important to the growth of membership.
- The secretary reminded the members that the National Encampment will be held 20-23 Aug. He urged that those who have not attended before should do so and that it is now the time to secure room reservations and banquet tickets.
- DC Downs pointed out that he would attend the dedication ceremony of the historical marker at the Lusk Ancestral Home in Cleveland, Tennessee, on 13 Jun. He recommended attendance.

- The commander ended the discussion with the recommendation that the Camp accept Bro. Roy Gamble's offer to use his tractor to drive a Camp Float in the Maryville Christmas Parade on 5 Dec. Members agreed this would be a worthy community event in which to participate.

5. The Camp Secretary reported the final membership numbers that were included in the Annual Camp Report that is send to National each year. The membership totaled a healthy 28 members in last year's report. This year's report, however, showed a total of 51 members, with an additional member who joined just after the cut-off date. This included seven transfer members from Colonel Robert Byrd Camp No. 8 of Athens, which is surrendering its charter shortly. He and the Commander both added that there are several membership applications in progress, so they both expect significant increase in the near future that could increase membership to near 60 Brothers.

6. Ms Tussey presented a short briefing on her photographic services. She views her work as helping her clients to tell their story, not just to have a nice picture taken. She's very adaptable to their needs as well and can create pictures that will suit the period nature of what we do. The members expressed interest in using her services in the future.

The meeting was adjourned at 1330 hours.

FOR THE COMMANDER

In Fraternity, Charity and Loyalty,

Douglas K. Fidler, PhD, PDC
Secretary, Maj Wm A. McTeer Camp 39
Department of Tennessee