

April is Confederate History Month in Union County



Photo by Mark Novak

Members of the local Sons of Confederate Veterans and United Daughters of the Confederacy inside the Union County Commissioner's Office. April is Confederate History Month in Georgia.

By Mark Novak
North Georgia News
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Union County Sole Commissioner Lamar Paris has proclaimed that April should be recognized as Confederate History and Heritage Month.

In an effort to preserve their Southern heritage, the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans have teamed up to promote the history of the Confederacy.

Paris joined local representatives of both groups on April 4 in his office, where he signed the proclamation.

"Unlike some things that are going on in the country, I happen to believe you can't erase or change history," said Paris. "It's important when you have ancestors, descendants and people in the community that fought and died for a cause, even if the cause may have been questionable now."

"Looking at it in hindsight, it certainly was not questionable at the time that the war was going on, so to go back now and erase that history because some people think those were unjust causes, it just flies in the face of what history is all about."

Added Paris: "Those kids didn't go out there to join the Confederate or Union Army to go get killed and slaughtered just because they wanted to have a good time. They felt like that was what they had to do to protect their way of life. And to not be able to honor them is a mistake, and I'm glad we were able to sign a proclamation for the Confederate Veterans."

During and after the proclamation signing, members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy Smith's Legion Chapter No. 2699 and Sons of Confederate Veterans Pvt. David W. Payne Camp No. 1633 shared memories of their ancestors who fought in the war.

"To me, this day is a remembering of our ancestors," said Beverly Shreeve. "My great-great-grandfathers fought for the Confederacy, well, two of them did, and they both lost their lives in the war. It was the War Between the States and not the Civil War."

Remembering the true history is important to both groups.

"We are remembering our true history, we're remembering what happened to our ancestors, remembering the division it caused families and communities," said Ann Atchison. "True history is not taught in schools anymore, and so we're out there to bring patriotism, history, benevolence and education to the people."

April is significant to the history of the war, as it began in April and ended in April, and Confederate Memorial Day has been celebrated in Union County for more than 100 years.

Confederate Memorial Day is on April 26, and the Pvt. David W. Payne Camp No. 1633 Sons of Confederate

Veterans will be hosting a Memorial Day Ceremony at 10 a.m. on Saturday, April 28, at the Union County War Memorial Park.

Pvt. David W. Payne was born on April 26, 1862, in Union County, and he enlisted in the 23rd Georgia Volunteer Infantry Regiment, Company K, at Camp McDonald, Big Shanty, Georgia, in August of 1862.

April 26 also marks the anniversary of the end of the Civil War for Georgia, and April 26, 1865, is when Confederate Gen. Joseph E. Johnston surrendered to Union Gen. William T. Sherman at Durham Station, North Carolina.

Camp No. 1633 is named in honor of Payne, according to Camp1633.scv.org.



Photo by Mark Novak

Commissioner Lamar Paris signing a proclamation declaring April as Confederate History and Heritage Month.

AARP Foundation Tax Aide

Free in-person tax preparation. Every Friday February 2 through April 13, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. First come, first served or now accepting limited appointments, 770-312-2258.

Location: St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 7 Ewing Street, Blue Ridge, GA at corner of Ewing and Jones Street by the old Kiwanis fairgrounds.

When you come, please bring the following: Photo ID; Social security cards or statements (SSA-1099) for everyone on the return, including children; last years tax returns, if available; W-2

forms from each employer and unemployment compensation statements; all 1099 forms, including interest, dividends, pension & IRA distributions, investment income, etc.; Dependent care information if any - name, employer ID or social security number; Documentation if itemizing deductions - receipts, cancelled checks, etc.

We work hard to make sure you get every tax credit and deduction you've earned. The program is open to taxpayers of all ages. AARP membership is not required. Our volunteers are trained and IRS-certified every year.

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house discovered it."

Lt. Osborn was the on-call investigator when the call came in that day, and he drove out to the house and secured the scene.

"Several items had been taken, including firearms, at this particular crime scene," said Lt. Osborn. "The area of the home is very remote, so you could take your time and nobody would have noticed."

Unfortunately, the perpetrator of the crime didn't leave investigators much to work with, though Lt. Osborn said he had a hunch that Stockwell was the burglar.

Stockwell lived in the area and was known to authorities for past crimes, said Lt. Osborn, but he didn't have enough evidence to secure a search warrant at the time.

"Another burglary occurred at the same residence, and March 8 was when it was discovered," said Lt. Osborn. "They had entered the house the same way, by forcing the backdoor open."

About a week later on March 16, as Lt. Osborn continued to hunt for leads in the Union County burglaries, he got a phone call from Fannin County Sheriff's Investigators.

"Hey, we've got some burglaries over here," Lt. Osborn recalled being told. "'And we've got a Kevin Stockwell in Polk County,

Tennessee. He burglarized an elementary school up in Turtletown, stole copper wiring, and he also burglarized a house in our county, stole guns."

"Then, he started describing the same things that he'd taken over here in Union County, and I knew right then he was my man."

With Stockwell safely locked up in a Tennessee jail, Lt. Osborn and the investigators from Fannin County executed a search warrant at his residence here in Union County, located less than five minutes from the Jonica Gap residence that had been burglarized, per Lt. Osborn.

"We did find items there that belonged at the residence in Blue Ridge that was burglarized, and did find items there that belonged to my resident here in Union County," said Lt. Osborn.

The reason Stockwell had targeted those particular Fannin and Union homes became clear over the course of the investigation - he had done work in and around both homes at some point in the past, per Lt. Osborn.

"Know who's working for you," said Lt. Osborn, offering advice to residents. "Use deadbolts and make sure your windows are locked. We do live in a beautiful part of the country, but make sure you know the people that live

around you.

"If you have somebody that you're suspicious of, please call us. We will check them out."

The Union County Sheriff's Office has charged Stockwell with two counts of burglary in the first degree, two counts of burglary in the second degree, and 14 counts of felony theft by taking for the stolen firearms.