

WHAT IS THE SCV?

Within months following the cessation of hostilities between the North and South in 1865, groups of male descendants of those who had served in the Confederate Army and Navy were formed throughout the South. The main objective of the "sons" was the welfare and comfort of the men who had "worn the gray."

After a time, these young men realized that their efforts would be more effective if all of them were joined together in some kind of federation. In this way, they could render whatever assistance might be needed to support the United Confederate Veterans which had been organized in New Orleans, Louisiana on June 10, 1889.

This federation was to be realized on July 1, 1896, during the annual meeting of the United Confederate Veterans in Richmond, Virginia. It was on this day that twenty-four "camps," as they were called, from five Southern states, approved the formation of the "United Sons of Confederate Veterans" and J. E. B. Stuart, Jr. was elected the first leader.

The Unified Sons of Confederate Veterans declared their objectives to be several in number. Because they had initially formed camps to assist the veterans, it was only natural that they were committed "to comfort, succor, and assist needy Confederate Veterans, their wives, widows, and orphans." Their annual meetings would be at the same site and dates of that of the United Confederate Veterans.

However, these were farsighted young men who realized that the day would come when there would be no more veterans, widows, or orphans left to assist. But, there would always be a need to see "...that the events of the War Between the States are authentically and clearly written..." remembered and defended.

In 1912 the name of the organization was shortened to "Sons of Confederate Veterans." Today the Sons of Confederate Veterans, or "SCV" as it is often referred, is growing, not only in the South, but throughout the nation. It is a voluntary organization of both direct and collateral descendants of those who served honorably in the Confederate Army and Navy. It is patriotic, historical, educational, benevolent, non-political, and non-sectarian. It is not affiliated with any other organization.

SCV perpetuates in its organization the plan of the Confederate Army by being divided into three departments: Army of Northern Virginia Department, comprising the states of Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, West Virginia, the District of Columbia, and those states located east of the State of Ohio and north of Virginia; the Army of Tennessee Department consisting of Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, Mississippi, Florida and those states not included in the other departments; the Army of Trans-Mississippi consisting of Louisiana, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, New Mexico and all other states west of the Mississippi River.

It is lead by a Commander-in-Chief and a Lieutenant Commander-in-Chief, both of whom are elected, in even years, for a term of two years, at a General Convention of

the organization. Between the annual General Conventions, the administrative responsibilities of the SCV are vested in the General Executive Council. This Council is composed of the Commander-in-Chief, Lt. Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant-in-Chief, Chief of Staff, Judge Advocate-in-Chief, the three Department Commanders, a Committeeman from each Department, and all past Commanders-in-Chief.

The general headquarters of the organization is located in Columbia, Tennessee. Here records are maintained on each member and his ancestry and overall coordination of the SCV's functions are carried out. The national organization publishes quarterly, an official magazine, the *Confederate Veteran*, wherein local activities and membership information is disseminated.

Within each Army Department are found "Divisions." These divisions are composed of camps within a respective state and presided over by a Division Commander and staff. It is required that there be five camps to form officially into a division. However, the Commander-in-Chief may authorize a division with a lesser number.

The "Camp" is the basic unit of the Sons of Confederate Veterans. Seven or more men eligible for membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans may apply for a Camp charter. They elect officers that include a Commander, Lt. Commander, Adjutant, Chaplain, Treasurer, and such other officers as they see fit. Camps meet on a regular monthly basis and at these meetings knowledgeable talks on the Confederacy, films, audio-visual presentations, or discussions of historical events and people are the highlight of the monthly gathering. Camps also sponsor social events involving all members of the Camp, their families, and friends.

Camps may select their own projects. These projects may include maintaining and preserving Confederate monuments and memorials, answering misstatements appearing in the media, marking graves of Confederate soldiers, sailors, and statesmen, publicizing local Confederate events and holidays, field trips to various battlefields and Confederate shrines, sponsoring Confederate balls, to name just a few.

When a man joins the Sons of Confederate Veterans, he joins men of a like mind, men proud of a gallant heritage, and an earnest desire to see that the events of that great fratricidal conflict are correctly interpreted now and for generations to come.

Our goals remain those found in the commission to us by Lt. Gen. Stephen Dill Lee, "To you, Sons of Confederate Veterans, we submit the vindication of the Cause for which we fought; to your strength will be given the defense of the Confederate soldier's good name, the guardianship of his history, the emulation of his virtues, the perpetuation of those principles he loved and which made him glorious and which you also cherish. Remember it is your duty to see that the true history of the South is presented to future generations."