

Arizona Division – Sons of Confederate Veterans

Confederate Veterans Are Part of Arizona's History

There were many Political, Economic and Social causes that lead to thirteen Southern States leaving the Union and creating their own government almost 160 years ago. I am not here to argue these points as the discussion is clearly two sided, I would however recommend that its worth researching several items to start such as the Morrill Tariff Act, the Corwin Amendment, and the 1860 census figures, to provide a more clear picture of contributing factors other than just "oppression and white supremacy."

The American Civil War (or War Between the States – we use both terms to be "inclusive" of both perspectives) was a national tragedy for the nation – resulting in the largest loss of life for any American war with nearly 700,000 men and boys dead, and hundreds of thousands more wounded. Of the 1.2 million men and boys in the Confederate Army, 289,000 died and another 194,000 were wounded.

Aside from hard lessons, the war gave us a renewed sense of national unity and a shared pride in the bravery and courage of American soldiers *of both sides*; a testament to American valor. Valor that saw four former Confederate generals don blue uniforms in the Spanish-American War. Valor that carried forth in the blood of descendants who served in later wars. And valor embodied in who we are; Americans who recognize a sacrifice so great it is sacred memory to all. That is what the Sons of Confederate Veterans stands for and it proudly counts among its members descendants of many races, origins, and religions (yes, we have black and latino members).

The Arizona Division of the Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) is a non-political, historical, and patriotic organization dedicated to remembering the bravery, defending the honor, and protecting the memory of Confederate Veterans. Unfortunately, over the last 60 years and even today, representations of the Confederate Battle Flag have been hijacked and used by several racist hate groups, and its link to white supremacy cemented by a domestic terrorist in South Carolina – reaction to this symbol is understandable. We fully support the right of free speech for all, as provided in our Constitution, and do not condone, support, and in fact condemn racist and supremacist thinking.

Many of the Confederate Veterans who survived the War decided to head West and make a new start in the Arizona Territory, contributing to its growth and eventual Statehood. Several examples of prominent contributors are listed below:

"Captain" John Hance – the first Grand Canyon pioneer, who developed the first tourist trail and guided many guests through the canyon, including President Teddy Roosevelt.

Captain Granville Oury – Arizona Territory Representative to both the Confederate and later the United States Congress.

Jack Swilling – one of the original founders of Phoenix.

Hiram Alfred Owens – co founder of the McCracken mine and prominent cattleman.

James Henry Wright – appointed Arizona Chief Justice and good friends with Buckey O'Neill.

J. J. Thompson – who immigrated from Ireland to Texas, and eventually settled the Oak Creek Canyon, which is now Sedona.

Like other Veteran's organizations, which promote Veteran causes and awareness, the SCV likewise honors the service and sacrifice of every American War Veteran, which includes Confederate Veterans, as they are designated under U.S. law and treated as such by the Veterans Administration.

For the reasons stated above it is clear that Confederate Veterans, and the Sons of Confederate Veterans, deserve to be part of both the celebration of Arizona's History and the Tucson Rodeo Parade. Let us hope the rodeo parade committee maintains its policy against politically based entries.



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Sons of Confederate Veterans