

MARY CHESEBRO LEE

DETACHED TENT #23

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Isaiah Appollos Ryan
The Last Soldier of
Walworth County



THE LAST SOLDIER

Honoring the last Civil War soldier to die and be buried in Walworth County, the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War(SUVCW), Col. Hans C. Heg Camp #15 will mark the grave of Isaiah Appollos Ryan located at Lake Geneva's Oak Hill Cemetery in a ceremony on May 12th at 10:00 a.m. The "Last Soldier" project was initiated in 2003 by the Sons of the Union Veterans as a national effort to locate and appropriately mark the grave of the Last Civil War Soldier buried in each county/parrish of each state in our nation.

Isaiah Ryan was born in Fowler, New York on July 4, 1847. Ryan was educated in the schools of New York State. At the height of 5'8", a blue eyed, brown haired, 17 year old farmer decided in March of 1865 that he would enlist in Company F of the 193rd New York Infantry. He served as a dispatch rider through the Cumberland Gap, carrying messages between the Union Armies. Ryan was mustered out of service at Harper's Ferry on January 18, 1866. After the close of the war, he moved from New York to Wisconsin, settling first in the Waukesha area and later moving to Lake Geneva. He became a mason by trade and also engaged in farming.

In 1875 Ryan married Elizabeth Wilson of Lake Geneva. They had three children: Louis James, Joseph and Bessie.

On April 10, 1941 at the age of 93, Ryan died at his home in Elkhorn after suffering for months from ill health caused by a fractured hip. Military services were conducted at the Methodist Church with the Harry Kelly Post of the American Legion assisting. Ryan had been a member of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) veterans' organization and had been present at the 1938 National GAR Encampment commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg in Gettysburg, PA.

FRATERNITY, CHARITY, LOYALTY

The next meeting of Tent #23 will held at
The Delavan Community Centre
on Tuesday, April 23 at 6:30pm

Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War 1861-1865**Mary Chesebro Lee, Detached Tent #23****2018 Program Schedule**

- April 24:** A Victorian Easter
- May 22:** A Visit With Jenny Wade's Mother, Mary Wade (Hear about the Battle of Gettysburg from a first person narrative. Learn what it was like from a civilian point of view to witness the battle first hand. Connie Hansen (as Mary Wade) will share her personal experiences of the historic battle that took the life of her daughter, the only civilian killed during the Battle of Gettysburg.
- June 26:** Letters from the Front and Home, Georgia Kestol shares letters from her ancestor, Jesse Kjostolsen, a Norwegian immigrant who fought and died in the Civil War. Georgia found this treasure trove of letters in her historic home on Territorial Road in Whitewater, hidden in a closet. You will be amazed!
- July 24:** To be announced
- August 28:** Brian McManus and Col. Hans C. Heg Camp #15 of the Sons of Union Veterans share the "Last Soldier" national project which honors the last Civil War veteran in each county in the nation.
- September 25:** To be announced
- October 23:** Renowned reenactor, Christine Brookes portrays Mrs. Asa Farr, Widow of a Civil War soldier from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, a stellar performance filled with historical information.
- November 27:** The Elves of Tent #23 host a workshop to prepare cards and holiday treats for our homeless veterans and those in the current Military.
- December:** Annual Holiday Luncheon (date to be determined)

Refreshments for the April meeting will be provided by
Shirley Peterson and Linda Tanner-Freitag



AN EVENING WITH ELLEN

Members of Tent #23 shared a pleasant evening with Ellen Holly as she regaled the group with stories of her trips to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation to deliver donated supplies. Holly, who has been adopted by the Lakota Sioux on the “rez” will be making her 18th sojourn to South Dakota this coming fall. She says it’s an easy trip by getting on I-90 in Janesville and then turning left at the Badlands. The reservation is 100 miles long and 50 miles wide with a population of 40,000.

Holly noted that the reservation opened the Warrior Shelter for homeless veterans in 2006. The 13 bed facility is a transitional housing program designed for those veterans who have been honorably discharged from service. To enter the veterans must be “straight and sober”. Currently, there are 6 clients housed at the facility who receive job training and counseling for a variety of issues. The veterans must purchase their own personal items and food. Tent #23 donated \$100 for the purchase of needed items when Holly, accompanied by Past President of Tent 23, Charlene Staples, headed to Pine Ridge last November.

Holly and Staples made stops to deliver items on the reservation at the Warrior Shelter, nursing home, library, the schools, the emergency foster care program and much needed diapers to the Public Aid Department. In addition, they have delivered fire-fighting equipment and supplies donated by the Elkhorn and Lauderdale/LaGrange fire departments. These donations have facilitated the development of the reservation’s own volunteer fire department!

Immersed in the Lakota culture, Holly also shared an insight about the Indian culture. An example, she indicated that the hair is only cut when someone is in the process of grieving. The Lakota colors are black, white, red and yellow. Holly was given a lovely star quilt when she was adopted by the Lakota. She treasures the quilt and considers it a real honor to have been given it.



“It does not require many words to speak the truth.”
Quote from a Lakota Elder

Photos: (top, left to right) Charlene Staples, Tent #23 Past President, Ellen Holly, guest speaker (middle) Ellen Holly displays her star quilt that she received when she was “adopted” by the Lakota (bottom) Tent #23 members enjoying the presentation given by Ellen Holly