

**DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA**  
**Department Historian Annual Report**  
**For Calendar Year Ending December 31, 2024**

The overall approach adopted for the historian's report this year is to address types of activities, then describe by tent their activities that fell within that type. I will start with Patriotic Holidays in chronological order.

Memorial Day and Decoration Day

Sisters from Salome M. Stewart **Tent 55** participated in various activities for Memorial Day and Decoration Day in and around Gettysburg. Sister Jenny placed flags on soldiers' graves; Sister Pat participated in a Decoration Day program at the Pennsylvania Monument in the National Military Park; Sisters Faye, Jenny & Pat marched in the Parade and participated in the wreath-laying ceremony at the National Cemetery Rostrum. Sisters Faye and Jenny traveled to the York Springs gravesite of Brevet Brig. Gen. William Warren Stewart, who was cited by his superiors as having shown gallant conduct in the Battle of North Anna, VA.

Ruth F. Barnhart **Tent 56** held a memorial service at Old Brush Creek Cemetery in Irwin, Westmoreland County, which they had helped restore and rededicate in 2023. 28 known Civil War soldiers are buried there. A tent sister who lives nearby, routinely maintains the graves and cemetery in partnership with other community groups.

Mary Morris Husband **Tent 58** participated in Memorial Day/Decoration Day parades & ceremonies in locations that included Philadelphia National Cemetery; Doylestown in partnership with an American Legion Post; Watsontown Historical Association; and Laurel Hill Cemetery. They conducted a memorial service at the grave of Anna M. Ross, Civil War nurse from Philadelphia and Tent 58's namesake. She is interred in Lawnview Cemetery in Rockledge, Montgomery County.

Seven sisters of Annabelle Vorse Clark **Tent 60** placed a wreath on the grave of their tent namesake in Lewisburg Cemetery.

Members of Susanna Cook **Tent 61** attended services and participated in a parade in Everett, PA.

Katherine Wilson Curtin **Tent 62** jointly sponsored an information booth with the local DAR chapter in Boalsburg.

4th of July

Sisters of **Tent 58** participated in 4th of July parades and events, including a public reading of the Declaration of Independence at Hopewell Furnace in Elverson, PA, and a program at Revolutionary Soldiers Cemetery in Chester Co. This cemetery is the site of a mass grave where 22 unknown soldiers encamped at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-1778 died while under medical care at a nearby church serving as a hospital. A monument marks the mass grave. A Tent member served as a judge for the Lower Southampton 4th of July Parade.

Veterans Day

A member of **Tent 60** served on the Lewisburg Veterans Day Parade Committee.

Remembrance Day

**Tent 55** hosted their annual tea at the Corporal Skelly Post No. 9 GAR Hall for Brother and Sisters in town. Sisters Eileen, Faye, and Sharon helped with a program entitled "Songs & Stories of the Civil War" at Christ Lutheran Church in Gettysburg.

Sisters from **Tents 58 and 61** attended the tea, parade, ball and monument services; another Tent 58 Sister attended Remembrance Sunday at St. Thomas Church on Fifth Avenue in New York City.

### Wreaths Across America

Tents 60, 61, 62 and Clara Barton, Tent 64, reported that Sisters participated in the noon ceremony and/or placement of wreaths on veterans' graves in December 2024.

Another theme of 2024 activities across the Commonwealth was Community Service, Research and Education

Madaleine Gilbert **Tent 23** awarded Certificates of Appreciation to two North Allegheny High School students for Excellence in American History Studies.

In May, **Tent 56** presented JROTC badges and certificates to female cadets at Connellsville Area, Ligonier, and Albert Gallatin High Schools.

**Tent 58** Sisters tutored at Burlington County Library in New Jersey, assisted in language arts classes, led lessons on honey bees and bee keeping at local schools, and wrote articles for Civil War newsletters. They volunteered at a food pantry, grocery shopped for the elderly, co-led a Girl Scout troop, assisted a Boy Scout Scout Master, and presented scholarship awards to students.

Several members of **Tent 60** volunteered to pack boxes at a Central Pennsylvania Foodbank in October.

A **Tent 61** Sister attended a Gettysburg College Scholarship Lunch and met with DUVCW scholarship recipients. A month later, a member attended the Senior Awards Assembly at Conemaugh Township Area High School and presented a tent scholarship to a graduating student.

### Outreach and Recruiting

**Tent 55** was very active in engaging the public through Victorian dance. In April, Sister Pat participated in the Preservation Ball, an important fundraiser for the Gettysburg National Military Park's monument preservation program. In May, as a member of the Victorian Dance Ensemble, she gave dance demonstrations at the National Military Park Visitor Center. Several Sisters served as hosts for the Historic Gettysburg/Adams County Barn Tours. They gave demonstrations of writing and knitting attired in period dress, and while doing so, promoted DUVCW and membership. In October, the Tent held a Barn Dance fundraiser with part of the profits designated to benefit a charity. Other outreach activities included attending an event at the National Civil War Museum in February, where organizations highlighted their work. DUVCW pamphlets were distributed as well as coloring pages for children. Sister Nuri and her husband attended the Battle of Olustee reenactment in Florida in March, where there were opportunities to network with other reenactors, and also to recruit new reenactors and DUVCW prospective members among the visitors. They also attended Reenactors Appreciation Day at the Gettysburg Heritage Center, with similar networking opportunities.

**Tent 58** set up information tables at two history fairs, Camp William Penn and Historic La Mott Day.

Several Sisters from **Tent 60** created and staffed a display at the 3-day Richfield Dutch Days in July. They distributed DUVCW membership information and flags.

**Tent 62** set up a display booth at the Grange Fair for one week. Stand-up Pres. Lincoln and General U.S. Grant served as attention-catchers.

### Veterans Support

Sisters of **Tent 58** wrote cards to veterans and nursing home residents; participated in Stamps for the Wounded and encouraged other groups to initiate their own program. They purchased and distributed poppy pins to honor veterans.

A Sister of **Tent 60** sent birthday and holiday cards to the approximately 30 residents of a Veterans Home for homeless veterans in Orangeville, PA. She also periodically made sheet cakes and cupcakes for the veterans.

**Tent 64** sent holiday cards to residents of the Veterans Home in Hollidaysburg, PA.

### Historic Preservation - Keeping Green the Memory through Preserving Stories and Artifacts

Two members of **Tent 23**, representing the Daughters, marched in the Sharpsville, PA, 150th Anniversary parade in June 2024.

**Tent 55** held a wreath-laying ceremony at the grave of their tent's namesake, Salome M. Stewart, on what would have been her 182nd birthday.

**Tent 58** members cleared out weeds at Mount Moriah Cemetery, made and delivered wreaths to place on veterans' graves, shared the personal and military stories of Civil War veterans, and planted a tree at General Meade's grave in Laurel Hill Cemetery. Sisters attended the installation of a battlefield plaque in Williamsburg, VA commemorating the Battle of Williamsburg on May 5, 1862; in October members attended the Octavius Catto Memorial Ceremony held at the southwest corner of Philadelphia City Hall, and visited Omaha Beach and the Normandy American Cemetery in France in honor of the 80th Anniversary of D-Day on June 6. Members regularly volunteer at the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, the GAR Civil War Museum and Archive, the Spring-Ford Area Historical Society, and Bucks County Genealogical Society. They attended a plaque presentation at the GAR Museum and Archive to honor the legacy of Sara Vonderheid of Tent 58 who passed away in 2017 at the age of 95, leaving a generous bequest part of which was given in her name to the Museum.

In May, members of **Tent 61** attended a Patriot Marker Dedication Ceremony in West Virginia, and in July participated in monument clean-up at a Somerset County cemetery.

**Tent 62** honored Civil War veteran, Franklin Joseph Parker Trczyulny, flag bearer for Co E, 5th Reserves, 34th PA, who was killed in action at Fredericksburg, VA on Dec 13, 1864. His father brought his body back and buried him in the family cemetery in Milesburg, PA. They shared their research with Trczyulny descendants visiting from Illinois. Sisters placed flowers on the tombstone of their namesake, Katherine Wilson Curtin, and her husband, PA Civil War Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin in June. During the summer a Tent Sister offered monthly public walking tours of either children's graves in Union Cemetery, or points of interest in Bellefonte related to 19th century Women of Influence.

Two Sisters have taken responsibility for the upkeep of a private cemetery in Jersey Shore, PA. Tent duv Alyssa Long cleaned ten Civil War soldiers' graves in Ohio, where she lives, as part of her senior high school service project. Tent Sisters continued to work on Civil War First Lady Katherine Wilson Curtin's 1880s dress ensemble, owned by the National Civil War Museum and loaned to Shippensburg's Fashion Archives and Museum for conservation by Tent 62 under the mentorship of

Director Karin Bohleke. In 2024, Sisters continued conserving the fabrics, fasteners and beading, procuring mannequins and preparing them for display of the dress pieces. In September, after 4 years of work, the dress was temporarily transported to Centre County where it was featured in a special solo exhibit from Dec 17-22, 2024 at the Centre Furnace Mansion, sponsored by the Centre County Historical Society and Central PA Civil War Round Table. On opening night, a PowerPoint presentation was given detailing the dress's provenance and style, conservation process and its distinguished owner, researched and written by Tent Sisters. The presentation was recorded and has been posted on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=scZt7bS-acM>).

### Service to the Allied Orders

An organization must constantly attend to its own vitality and health by nurturing relationships up, down and crosswise.

**Tent 23** reported that it had been their honor to host PA Dept President Sister Daryl Reed and Dept Treasurer Sister Sharon Harkcom at their annual Christmas party.

Sister Pat of **Tent 55** presented a certificate and check to her granddaughter and Tent duv member, Vivian Trimble, whose essay entitled "Why I joined the duvs and my experiences as a duv," had been chosen for the award at the 2024 Department Convention. Tent 55 also joined with the Sons Gettysburg Camp 112 for a potluck holiday celebration in December.

**Tent 56** started planning a celebration of the 60th anniversary of their tent's founding to be held at the original meeting place, Pleasant Unity United Methodist Church. In September, several sisters participated in a grave rededication ceremony and charter renewal for Capt. George A. Cribbs, Camp 276 at St. John's Cemetery in Hempfield. Sisters also served as master of ceremonies and cantor at Operation Santa Claus for Southwest Veterans Hospital in Pittsburgh, partnering with The Retired Enlisted Association, the Sons Mount Union Church, Camp 502, and Mount Union Church Auxiliary 502.

**Tent 58** co-hosted the King of Prussia Annual Encampment/Convention, contributing time, wreaths and other materials.

**Tent 61** celebrated its 15th anniversary in June 2024, inviting all PA Sisters and Brothers to attend.

**Tent 62** purchased a memorial brick to be placed at Headquarters in Springfield, IL, in memory of Tent Sister and charter member, Jane Lynch.

And finally, tents who reported having members attending the Department or National Convention and/or who held Department or National offices, were Tents 56, 58, 60, 61, and 64, the then Dept President-elect, Sister Daryl Reed, being a Sister of Tent 61, as well as is Sister Sandra Millin, who was elected to the National Board of Trustees.

Before I yield the podium back, I would just like to give a shout out to our tent historians for their conscientious reporting of tent activities. They are:

Lori Caldwell, Tent 23  
Sharon Saunders, Tent 55  
Ruth Webster, Tent 56  
Mary Wible, Tent 58  
Sharon French, Tent 60  
Sandra Millin, Tent 61

Sue Kellerman, Tent 62

Donna Catron, Tent president of Tent 64 who subbed as tent historian

For the record, in addition to these 8 who wrote narratives, 3 Tents reported no activity - Tents 50, 53 and 63, and one, Tent 32, did not report.

Thank you very much for your patience in listening to the consolidated Historian's Report. Being a consolidation of the reports of 11 tents, it is lengthy, but gives us the opportunity to appreciate our Department's collective, inspiring, wide-ranging endeavors in 2024.

Thank you.

Linda Kao

Department Historian

Dept of Pennsylvania

DUVCW, 1861-1865