



Department of Pennsylvania
Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
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Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our nation's service. Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11, and was first observed on 30 May 1868. Many communities, including Boalsburg, Pennsylvania claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. Whoever claims credit for creating the first observance, it is important to remember that Memorial Day is not about division. It is about reconciliation; it is about coming together to honor those who gave their all. "Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten as a people the cost of a free and undivided republic." -- General Logan - May 5, 1868. We as Brothers of the SUVCW, at the time of our initiation, pledged to "always observe the day set aside by the Grand Army of the Republic as Memorial Day, sacred to the memory of the Union Soldiers and Sailors of 1861 to 1865 and do all in my power to persuade others to do the same;" Let these not be just words we said in a meeting and then forgot, let them be a call to arms to us and future generations. We must not and will not forget those who gave their lives so that we can continue to breathe the fresh air of freedom.

I urge all Brothers and Camps to participate in their local Memorial Day Observance. If your community does not have an observance, begin one. The observance does not need to be elaborate, but should be solemn and dignified, worthy of its purpose. Don't our ancestors deserve it? Haven't they earned it? If we don't remember, who will?

By order of

Richard R. Essenwein

Commander

Pennsylvania Department