



## Iowa Compatriot

Iowa Society: Sons of the American Revolution August 2025

### An Evening to Remember



Looking at the home from the street suggested the potential for surprise—and it happened. This tall, distinguished home originally belonged to Dubuque architect, Guido Beck. The owner, Mr. Kruger, and I stood on the porch for quite a while

discussing its construction in 1901, relocation in 1976, and the upkeep it has required. Mrs. Sharkey was thrilled about the program and was anxious to tell all about it to her husband when he returned from work. The other was not home.





Iowa SAR member Randy Breese spends a considerable amount of his time volunteering for worthy causes. He recently proposed the Iowa SAR take part in a fundraising event for the Central Iowa Shelter Services (CISS). The Iowa SAR agreed to participate with a \$250 donation and member volunteers.

On July 28, 2025, the Iowa Society, SAR took part in the 9th annual Fore Homeless Veterans Golf Outing benefiting the homeless U.S. veterans that are staying in an emergency shelter.

CISS hosted the event and IASSAR joined with member volunteers for a great day of golf to support veterans experiencing homelessness in Central Iowa. The clients include all branches of the military and their service spans from Vietnam to Afghanistan. Iowa SAR support provides them an opportunity to grow, rebuild, and reestablish their dignity.

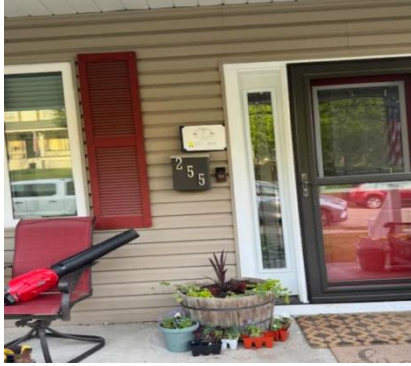
The Iowa SAR Color Guard was very visible greeting veterans and sponsors alike at the 1st Tee. Many of the participants asked to have photos taken with our uniformed members and all thanked the SAR for the support. Over 25 four person teams competed. The first hole offered golfers the opportunity to shoot their first tee drive with an air cannon.



The CISS serves up to 400 meals per day.

Contacts were also made to offer our members future opportunities to volunteer in other Iowa communities.

Mike Rowley



## Part II: The Rest of the Mount Vernon Story

You will remember the story in the July newsletter about Tony Townsend's success in getting a Confederate tombstone removed from a cemetery in Mount Vernon and replaced with a Union stone for a Civil War Veteran. July's newsletter was long enough to be charged book-rate, so I thought the story would be best continued here.

The headstone for Henry Belmer. Belmer, a Union soldier, was issued a Confederate style gravestone in 1903. Tony's efforts led the VA to issue the proper stone and requested Find-a-Grave to delete its picture of the stone installed with the former stone with the one shown here.

At a recent Zoom meeting, Mike Rowley added some great information which he repeated in an email. I'm quoting it here:

*At a recent SAR/1812 Zoom meeting we discussed the honorable people of history that are often under-represented or for other reasons seem to fall through the cracks in the remembering of history.*

*One way our volunteers and members have helped solve that problem at a low cost is to repurpose broken, damaged or misprinted stones into usable monuments.*



*The photos show several examples such as Henrietta Wallace a woman of color who served with the 39th Iowa for over 3 years (including Sherman's March to the Sea) as a cook.*

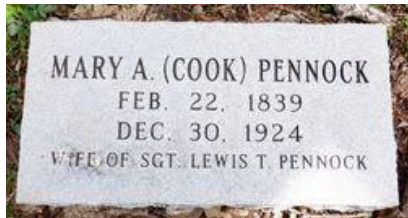




*Alice Cheeks , a Women's Relief Corp member, used her singing talents to honor veterans for many years.*



*Esther Allen, a Civil War nurse, was never formally recognized by the military for her long service.*



*Mary Ann (Cook) , a veteran's widow whose husband died and was buried in South Dakota, later died in Des Moines, Iowa.*

*Solutions can often be found if only we look. Ask cemeteries to keep "worn out" stones which have been replaced. Have them call you and then make plans to have them picked up by calling the Society's president.*

### **Pieces of Iowa's Past is Published**

Mike Rowley reports that Kevin Parmenter has succeeded in getting needed engraving done to add another name to the Revolutionary War Monument on the Capitol grounds in Des Moines.



Matrom Elmore's name is etched into the Iowa Society of the Sons of the American Revolution Monument on July 10, 2025.

On July 10, 2025, the forty-first name, Matrom Elmore, was engraved on the Iowa Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (IASSAR) Monument at the south side of the Iowa State Capitol complex. His name was uncovered by SAR Mike Rowley,

Elmore's great-great-great-great-great-grandson, through genealogical research.

Born in 1757 in Northumberland County, Virginia, Elmore served in the Revolutionary War beginning in 1779. He later moved to Kentucky, served again in 1780 and 1782, and was awarded 400 acres under a land relief act. He and his wife, Leander, raised six children. Around 1836, some of the Elmore family moved to the Iowa Territory — Matrom included. He passed away a few years later and was buried in Oakland/Meeks Cemetery in Lee County.



SAR President Kevin Parmenter and SAR Color Guard Commander Mike Rowley oversee the addition of the name. (Picture supplied by Axios)

**Pieces of Iowa Past** is published by the Iowa State Capitol Tour Guides weekly during the Legislative session. The publication features historical

facts about Iowa, the Capitol, and the early workings of state government.

To learn more about the monument, check out the following: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/TB/1542939.pdf>

### **Bringing the Celebration to the Audience**



Faced with high heat and humidity suffered by everyone this July 4th, a new and very promising activity was started this year in Dubuque.

Donning my Revolutionary War regalia, I visited Luther Manor Nursing home.

Walking slowly down each of its many corridors, I glanced into each room while staying in the hallway. If a resident was sitting in their room, I waved, call out a hearty “Happy Fourth of July” and saluted them.

The instantaneous grins were often accompanied by a comment along the lines of “Good to see you, George!” Staff members, of course, quickly pulled camera from pockets for pictures. As I returned to the social room near the door several patients had assembled for getting a picture of themselves with me.

### **Starting Them Young**



A recent visit of our youngest daughter and my grandson to Dubuque offered a chance to introduce a new activity for the future.

Packing up a two-gallon spray bottle with a preparation of Wet-and-Forget It and water, Drew and I headed for Linwood Cemetery. He had asked me the day before “what the SARs were up to” and I thought this might intrigue him.

It certainly did! I never got my hands on the sprayer. I followed along as he addressed decades of neglect and growth of “whatever” with a healthy spray. I pointed out places missed and congratulated him on his attention.

I took pictures of gravestones he sprayed and reminded him that even with the best work, some of the coloring would remain. I revisited the area of Linwood in which we worked the following day to retake pictures showing how much better just one treatment could make.

### Serving Our Nation’s Veterans

**Editor’s Note:.** The following is the latest of the reports of Mike Rowley as he sets about the task of attending to the grave markers of Iowa veterans. I, among all those who know him, admire so much the dedication he shows. These are his words.

*Some of the advantages of being a member and volunteer of The Iowa Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War and General Society of the War of 1812 include seeing towns that you might not otherwise have an occasion to visit.*

*Such was the case today (July 22, 2025) as a stone for War of 1812 veteran Elijah Coffing was being installed in Border Plains Cemetery on 270th Street north of Lehigh, Iowa.*

*Well placed signs on road corners and corn field and bean field fences were very helpful. As a first-time visitor to this very rural cemetery without an exact address I would never have found it without those well-placed signs undoubtedly placed by local volunteers.*

*The first field gate had a small wheel on it for easy opening and closing. While I have never met the landowners it was*



*very apparent to me that these were people that not only sacrificed a substantial amount of crop land to allow access to the nearly 1/2 mile path between corn and bean fields to the cemetery, but the narrow passage was well maintained and fortified a bit with some small gravel.*

*At the end of my very slow journey down the path in my Ford with a 240 lb. granite stone in the back I was pleased to see a beautiful and very well cared for cemetery. Findagrave.com lists 159 names here.*

*As we all know there are many stories to uncover in these outdoor history museums. After installing the stone, what struck me was the long commitment to service citizens of this community has had. You see in the same section of this only row were not only our War of 1812 veteran but also Abraham Barger a Civil War veteran who lived 100 years and Paul Barger a WWII veteran. 3 men whose lives span from the 1700s to 2013.*

*Perhaps these and the others like them who sacrificed and contributed to their community are part of the reason this place is so well preserved and maintained.*



Picture 1—1/2 mile path to reach the cemetery

Picture 2—The new stone







Picture 3—New stone next to spouse's marker



Picture 4—Graves of War of 1812, Civil War, and World War II veterans in the same row.

### **Dr. Sunleaf Participates in the Great Plains and Great Lakes Regions Children of the American Revolution Meeting in Indiana.**



*The meeting took place at Bradford Woods - Indiana University Outdoor Center outside of Martinsville, IN. He facilitated team building activities for the attendees as well as brought greetings from Iowa SAR. Below are his remarks.*

*"I attended the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains regional meeting in Kansas City last summer. Because of the energy and care demonstrated I observed while there, I decided to gather my documents and apply to be a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. My commitment is made a little easier as I'm the husband/HODAR of the Senior National Vice President of the Great Plains Region, Amy Crow Sunleaf.*

*On behalf of the North Central District and the Iowa Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, I bring you very warm greetings.*

*We commend the members of the Great Plains and Great Lakes Regions Children of the American Revolution for your dedication to patriotism, service, and the preservation of our nation's founding ideals.*

*Your energy and commitment are inspiring, and they give us great hope for the future.*

*Hopefully, this meeting was a time of learning, community building, and renewed purpose as you continue your important work. Best wishes and congratulations on a successful and memorable gathering!”*

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