

Historical Overview

This year commemorates 160 years since the mustering in of the Mormon Battalion at Council Bluffs, Iowa on July 16, 1846 in response to a U.S. government request for enlistment of men from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to serve in the Mexican War for one year. War had been declared by the United States on May 13, 1846.

About 500 enlisted men, nearly all Latter-day Saints, were formed into 5 companies; whose number was enlarged by at least 6 others in the battalion staff, some with accompanying aides; 10 scouts served at different times during the march; 35 women and 45 children (primarily family members of the soldiers); and at least 11 others serving as teamsters, aides, and assistants formed the on-the-trail community of the Mormon Battalion. The Battalion's first commander and recruiting officer, Lt. Col. James Allen, named them the Mormon Battalion, the only religiously identified military unit in federal service in American military history.

The Battalion marched 1,900 miles into the American Southwest to their destinations of San Diego, San Luis Rey, and Los Angeles enduring legendarily difficult hardships while in places trailblazing an important new wagon road to the coast. In San Diego, they significantly helped change attitudes about Americans and were an important part of the army of occupation for the rest of Southern California. Seventy-nine of the Battalion responded to requests to re-enlist as well as three young LDS aides to form the Mormon Volunteers, serving until March 14, 1848. During the Battalion and Volunteers' military service, 30 of the entourage died — 22 soldiers and 8 non-soldiers.

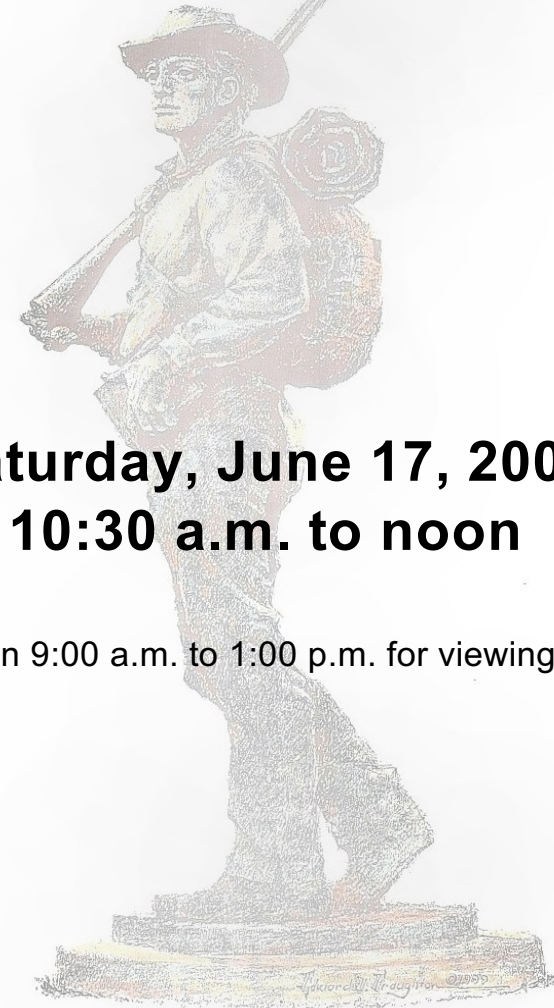
Following discharge, some of the veterans further etched themselves into history by opening up the Carson Trail over the Sierra Nevadas and others in their association with the discovery of gold that resulted in the Gold Rush of 1849 and its historic impact on populating the West.

Today's Mormon Battalion Heritage Organization

Presently organized into eight Battalion companies and seven Ladies Auxiliary units that seek to meet monthly or quarterly and are located throughout the Midwest and West, today's U.S. Mormon Battalion is involved in a variety of activities — from memorializing gravesites of the original Mormon Battalion and their wives, to yearly assisting hundreds of Boy Scouts earn a Mormon Battalion Trail patch and acknowledging many others at Eagle Scout Courts of Honor, to providing historic reenactors that march in civic parades throughout the Midwest and West. In addition, the organization helps perpetuate the sacrifices and service of the Mormon Battalion through speakers, videos, articles, public gatherings, permanent memorials, statuary, and markers.

If you would find this of interest, please call (801) 256-0329 for both Battalion and Women's Auxiliary or go to www.mormonbattalion.com.

Mormon Battalion Heritage Day



Saturday, June 17, 2006
10:30 a.m. to noon

(Doors open 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for viewing displays)

LDS Bountiful Regional Center
835 North 400 East, North Salt Lake
(Exit 315 at 2600 South on I-15)

U.S. Mormon Battalion

Executive Committee

Commander: COL Norman T. Erikson
Executive Officer LTC Robert P. Paul
Adjutant: MAJ Richard Bullock
Finance Officer: MAJ Tom Coyne
Enlistment/Membership Officer: MAJ Gloyd Sprouse
Acting Publicity Officer: LTC Jerome Gourley
Chief Adviser: COL Carl V. Larson
Women’s Auxiliary President: Annie P. Erikson

2006 Heritage Day Committee

Chairman: Jay M. Todd; Media Relations/Publicity: LTC Jerome Gourley;
Audio and Video Production: John Hayes; Displays: Norma Bench

Battle Hymn of the Republic verse 3 for audience participation:

In the beauty of the lilies, Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me.
As He died to make men holy, let us live to make men free,
While God is marching on.
Glory, glory, hallelujah! Glory, glory, hallelujah!
Glory, glory, hallelujah! His truth is marching on.
(Text: Julia Ward Howe; music: Anon.)

The historic reenactors, in representation of the original Mormon Battalion, have received approval to post the flags carrying military accoutrements and disarmed period muskets for today’s program.

National and state flags posted outside, courtesy of Colonial Flag, Sandy, UT.

The U.S. Mormon Battalion, a Utah non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation, seeks to perpetuate the heritage of the Mormon Battalion and its contributions to the United States during the 1846-48 Mexican War, to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and to western American colonization and history. The organization seeks to fulfill the Utah Governor's Proclamation that there be an annual "Mormon Battalion Heritage Day."

Tax deductible contributions and donations are invited and may be sent to:

LTC Gaylen Maynes, National Finance Officer
U.S. Mormon Battalion
P.O. Box 1983, Sandy, UT 84091
Phone: (801) 255-3197
email: maynes5@earthlink.net

Program

Prelude and postlude music.....J. Garn Ford, Lakeview Ward organist, Centerville North Stake

Master of ceremonies.....Bob Evans, News Anchor, KSTU / FOX 13 Television – News at Nine

Posting of the flags and Pledge of Allegiance.....Mormon Volunteers, Company A, Historic Reenactors, CAPT Jared Cornell, Commanding

Sterling Singers.....Battle Hymn of the Republic, conducted by Merrilee Webb (Audience to sing verse 3; see opposite page for words.)

Invocation.....CAPT Dale Read, Company “C,” Ogden

Welcoming remarks.....COL Norman T. Erikson, Commander, U.S. Mormon Battalion

“In Honorable Remembrance” video.....Jay M. Todd, producer/writer; **John Hayes**, director/editor, **Ryan Rasmussen**, editor

Sterling Singers.....Camp of Israel (Text: Eliza R. Snow; music: Trent A. Oliphant)

A segment from “A Soldier’s Tale”.....M. Gordon Johnson, former director, Mormon Battalion Visitors Center, San Diego, California

Sterling Singers.....The Bullfight on the San Pedro (Text: Levi Hancock; music: Anon.); *The Lonesome Roving Wolves* (Text: Levi Hancock; music: Anon.); *Brighter Days In Store* (Text: Anon.; music: Stephen Foster). (Newly arranged music for each, Trent A. Oliphant)

Speaker....Elder L. Tom Perry of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A General Authority of the LDS Church since 1972, Elder Perry has been a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles since 1974.

Sterling Singers.....Faith in Every Footstep (Text and music: K. Newell Dayley)

Benediction.....Javann Nuttall, President, Company “B” Women’s Auxiliary, Salt Lake Valley