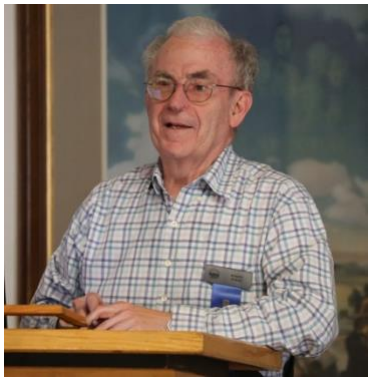
SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS
MILLS CHAPTER Celebrating Utah's Pioneer Heritage / www.supmills.com

JUNE 2026 NEWSLETTER

Next Meeting, Monday, June 8, 6:30 p.m.
at the ***National Headquarters, 3301 East 2920 South, Salt Lake City, Utah***

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Randy Baker, Mills Chapter President



Our May Mills chapter meeting was a real treat learning from Jeffery Lowe about the history of firearms and seeing his passion for them and highlighting what events caused change in them over the years.

Thank you for contributions to the scholarship fund. Part of our June chapter meeting will be devoted to introducing scholarship recipients and their families to chapter members and learning of their accomplishments and ambitions. I hope it will be rewarding to you to see the quality of youth we have.

The other part of our June chapter meeting will be hearing from Nathaniel Gee, son of our own Merrill Gee. Nathaniel is a renowned dam safety engineer and will speak about his book on the Teton dam disaster. What a treat to have such connections to this topic.

Another item you will see in this newsletter's announcements is the Mills Board's support of the "Lest We Forget" project by Becky Anderson. Becky identified some of her ancestors that have pauper's graves at the Salt Lake City Cemetery and wanted them to have proper monuments. She has expanded her project to have a monument/recognition for all in the pauper section, not just her ancestors. The Mills Board encourages chapter members to contribute to Becky's worthwhile project.

I again urge each chapter member to connect with an ancestor this year and I hope that your personal efforts are rewarding. I have discovered some very touching things from a couple of my ancestors that has helped me greater appreciate the blessings I have from them. I also encourage all chapter members to be involved in SUP national events to support our own connection with the values of our ancestors.

Confirming your attendance at Mills chapter meetings is very appreciated. It helps ensure we get the meal order to the caterer correct so that we have adequate food for meetings.

Meeting Recap

May 11, 2026

Jeff Lowe

"Firearms of the 19th Century and their importance in early Utah Pioneering"

Our May speaker was Jeff Lowe, an illustrator, artist, historian, and retired schoolteacher who spent his career teaching Visual Arts and German language. A lifelong student of history, he showed us part of his extensive collection of weaponry, spanning hundreds of years from medieval armour and swords to early muskets. It also includes several replicas made by him of many firearms including smooth bore flintlocks, percussion cap rifles, pistols and knives. His wife showed her wooden longbow and hand made arrows she uses in competitive events. Jeff helped us understand the essential role that firearms played in the westward expansion of the US during the great emigration period from 1830 – 1869 along the wagon routes. Not only were they essential for obtaining food, they aided in defense.

He also spoke about the involvement of he and his wife in the reenactment of Mountain Man history, in particular the group at the Fort Buenaventura State Park in Ogden. This group has monthly meetings and holds its annual Rendezvous at the Fort over Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25.

Upcoming Meeting

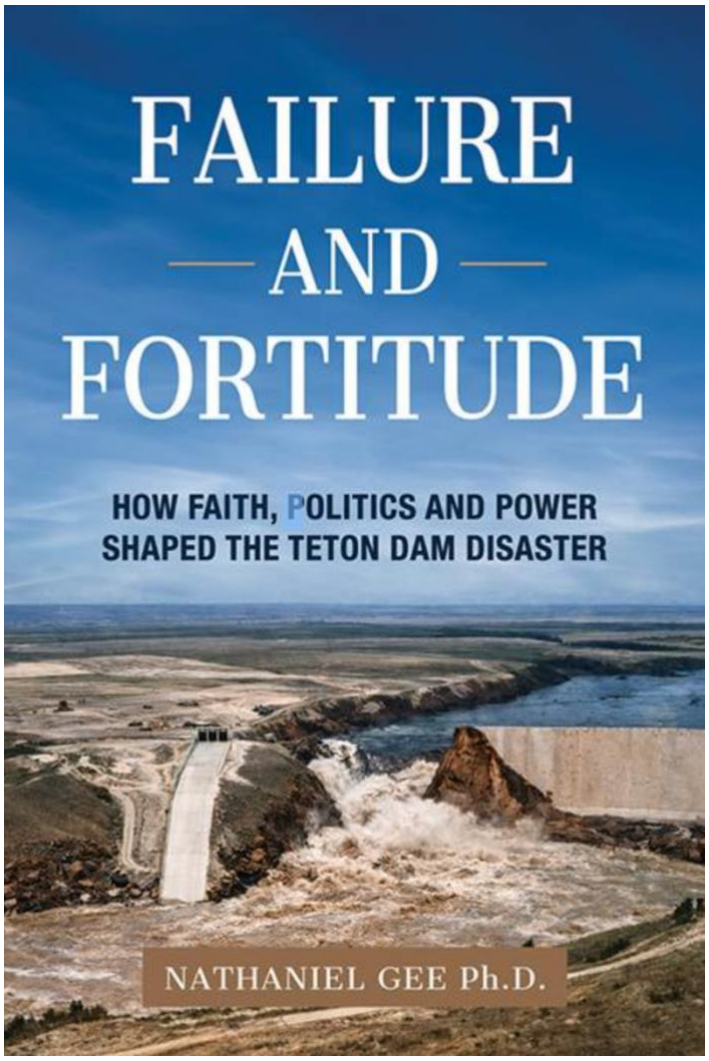
June 8, 2026

Nathaniel Gee

Our June meeting will feature Nathaniel Gee, son of chapter member Merrill Gee. He is a professional civil engineer and serves as the Manager of the Dam Safety Oversight and Governance Group for the Tennessee Valley Authority helping guide policy for the TVA's Dam Safety Program.

He will speak to us about his interesting experiences in assuring dam safety. in particular, he will talk about his book about the Teton Dam Disaster in Idaho on June 5, 1976 which killed 11 people and caused over $300 million. Many chapter members have personal experiences in helping with the clean-up of the devastation in those communities.

Mr Gee served as Regional Engineer for the LC Region of the Bureau of Reclamation helping maintain some of the largest dams in the United States. He has performed various inspections including rope access and dive inspections of some of nation's largest and oldest dams including Roosevelt and Horse Mesa dams on the Salt River in Arizona, Parker Dam spanning the Colorado River near Lake Havasu City, and the majestic Hoover Dam. Nathaniel received a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from Brigham Young University, and a master's degree, also in Civil Engineering, from the University of Nevada - Las Vegas.



In his spare time he continues to write and recently has his second book published, *Of Pigs and Priests*, a romantic comedy. He lives in Signal Mountain Tennessee with his wonderful wife, Jeanine, and nine energetic children.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUPer-DUPer Day at This is the Place Heritage Park

- Saturday, July 18, 2026
- 10:00 AM 5:00 PM
- National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers (map)

10am Speaker at the Pioneer Center followed by a day of fun and activities in This is the Place Heritage Park.

Days of '47 Sunrise Service

- Friday, July 24, 2026
- 7:00 AM 8:00 AM
- Social Hall Avenue Chapel (map)

Days of '47 Parade

- Friday, July 24, 2026
- 8:30 AM 11:00 AM
- National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers Handcarts

National Encampment - Portneuf / Grove City Chapters

- Thu, Sep 17, 2026 to Sat, Sep 19, 2026
- National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers (map)

SUP 2026 National Trek: Washington DC, Philadelphia

- Tue, Oct 13, 20269:00 PM Fri, Oct 23, 202610:00 PM
- National Society of the Sons of Utah Pioneers (map)

THE MISSION OF THE SONS OF THE UTAH PIONEERS

- Come to know our fathers and mothers and turn our hearts to them
- Preserve the memory and heritage of the early pioneers of the Utah Territory and Western US
- Honor present-day pioneers worldwide who exemplify these same qualities of character
- Teach these same qualities to the youth who will be tomorrow's pioneers

Becky Anderson

Restoring the Memory of Pioneer Ancestors in Unmarked Graves

DUP member Becky Anderson spoke about her experience in doing family history when she discovered an ancestor and wanted to find their grave in the Salt Lake Cemetery. To her surprise, she found that the person had been buried in the “Paupers Grave” area with a large number of others. She then began a project to recognize the many pioneers who were buried in these unmarked graves. She and her DUP chapter and friends and family have done extensive research working with the cemetery records to discover the names and dates of burial of dozens who did not have the means to be buried with a headstone. They have also raised funds to create several new markers listing some of the names of those buried there.

Their work continues with another set of markers under way. She is seeking additional donations from interested individuals. Donations can also be made to her non-profit organization IN REMEMBRANCE by using this QR code to link to the association account or by contacting her at becky7a@gmail.com .

JUST SCAN TO DONATE:

How to pay your Mills Chapter and National SUP Annual Dues

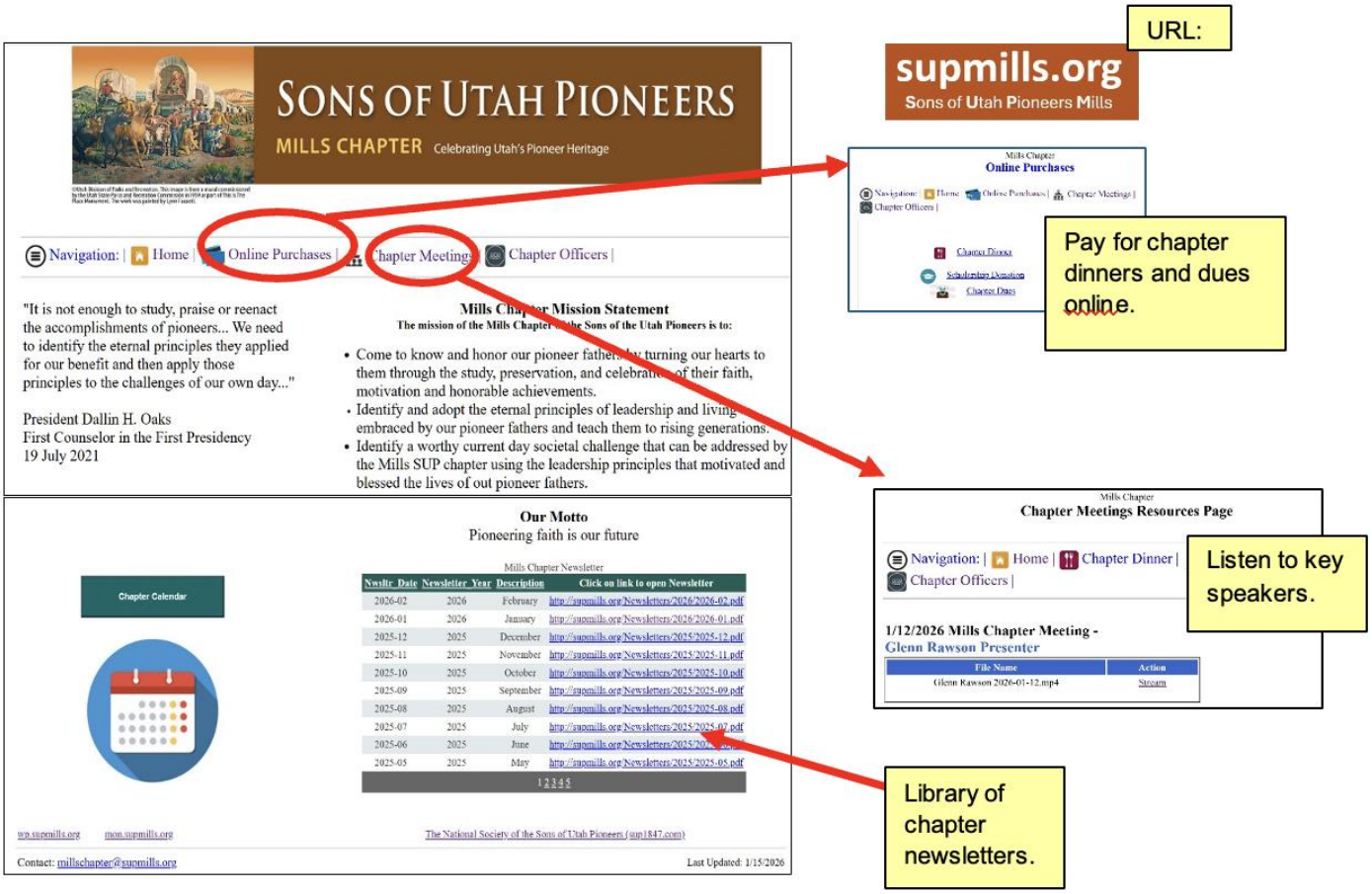
Chapter Dues

Chapter dues are $25.00 per year payable at the first of each year. You can pay this **four** ways:

1. Pay by check at the check-in table by the door at the next meeting
2. Pay by bank card at the check in table
3. Mail a check to Randy Baker, 1109 Harvard Ave, Salt Lake City, UT, 84108
4. Pay on the chapter website with a bank card - https://supmills.org . See instructions below.

National Dues

National Dues are $65.00 per year and are due at the first of the year. They can be paid in person at HQ office during business hours or by check mailed to 3301 East 2920 South Street, Salt Lake City, UT, 84109

Chapter Web Site Information

Overview of the Mills Chapter Website as presented by Chapter President Randy Baker at February Meeting. Shows how to pay dues, view recorded speakers and get copy of the newsletter on your computer or phone.