SONS OF UTAH PIONEERS

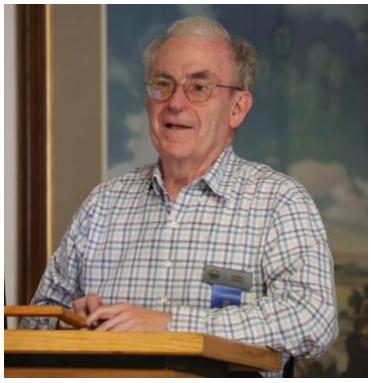
MILLS CHAPTER Celebrating Utah's Pioneer Heritage / www.supmills.com

AUGUST 2026 NEWSLETTER

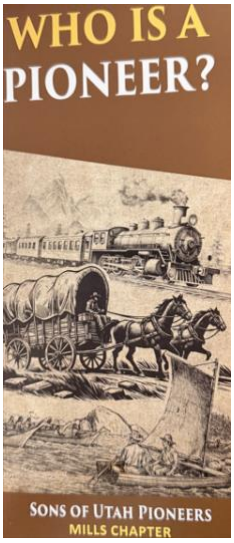
Next Meeting, Monday, August 10, 6:30 p.m.
at the ***National Headquarters, 3301 East 2920 South, Salt Lake City, Utah***

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Randy Baker, Mills Chapter President



Our July Mills chapter meeting was a real treat. Aaron Combs spoke about the remarkable "Philosophical foundations and genius of the US Constitution." He traced the ideas of freedom and democracy through history and how the founding fathers wanted this country to have the best government possible. A copy of his slides and a recording of his remarks are posted to the meeting section of our chapter website.



One of the concerns we have had as a Mills Chapter Board is the dwindling numbers at our monthly chapter meetings. Several other SUP Chapters have a similar issue. We believe this is due to a couple of reasons: a few of our dear chapter members have passed away and as people get older it is not so easy to be involved. To help promote the mission of the Sons of Utah Pioneers and the Mills Chapter, three of our board members, Steve Cook, Rees Petersen, and Jeff Edwards, have developed a superb pamphlet that in a succinct way tells what we are all about. We will be sharing these pamphlets with chapter members to help your friends understand us. Also, your ideas are appreciated in helping distribute the pamphlets and promoting the chapter. Watch for them.

I again urge each chapter member to connect with an ancestor this year, I hope that your personal efforts are rewarding. I also encourage all chapter members to be involved in SUP national events to support our own connection with the values of our ancestors.

Thank you for making the Mills Chapter so wonderful.

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.

Upcoming Meeting

August 10, 2026

The Interesting History of the Washington DC Temple

Our August speaker is Jim Barker who will speak about the unique and surprising history of the building of the Washington DC temple. In particular, he will tell the story of how the purchase of the land came together at the last minute for the Church to buy the most coveted and impressive acreage in the Washington, DC metro area.

Plans for temple were first made public in 1968 and it was dedicated in 1974 by President Kimball. It became the first temple east of the Mississippi River since the Nauvoo Temple was built in 1846.

It was rededicated in 2022 and Jim will also share some of the experiences he and his wife had during that remarkable event.

Jim is the founding partner of the Barker Leavitt law firm located in Washington, DC. He is recognized as an expert in the federal legislative process. He has provided strategic guidance, government relations and legal related services for his clients over the last quarter century.

He has represented some the largest and most well-known companies in America: Fannie Mae, Microsoft, Adobe, IBM, and Sonic Health Care USA, among others. He has also represented the largest water district in the country, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California as well as the Municipal Water District of Orange County and numerous other water districts. Infrastructure and appropriations issues have been a key part of Jim Barker's practice and he has helped guide the Utah Transit Authority in receiving billions of dollars in federal grants in order to build out its TRAX and Front Runner Train Systems.

Prior to going into private practice, Jim worked as Utah Senator Bob Bennett's Chief of Staff and also worked as a Committee Staff Director in Congress. He is an active Member of the Washington, DC Bar Association and a graduate of Pepperdine University School of Law.

Jim Barker is married to Ann Brady Barker and they have resided in Oakton, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, DC for the last forty years. Recently they served as Senior Missionaries in Paris, France and are the proud grandparents of twelve grandchildren.

Meeting Recap

June 8, 2026

"The philosophical foundations and genius of the US Constitution"

Aaron Combs, University of Utah Institute

Aaron Coombs gave us a fascinating and inspiring view of the history and the origins of the legal system that brought about the Constitution of the United States in 1789.

He has taught seminary and is now at the University of Utah institute and is currently finishing his PhD in Political Theory and American Politics there. Aaron is married to the amazing Sharon Tidwell (daughter of chapter members Tony and Kathy Tidwell) and they have four daughters. Tony introduced Aaron.

Aaron gave us many reasons to appreciate the significance and durability of the US Constitution and a lot to think about. He reminded us that the Constitution's basic premise is that a country should be governed by laws and not people which had the been the case for thousands of years of monarchy. Before this, a constitutional democracy had never done before.

"For the constitution to be permanent, all the parts of the state must wish that it should exist and that these arrangements can be maintained. The constitution itself is a piece of parchment. It has no power. It doesn't do anything. its power comes from the ideas in it and that we all agree to be governed by it. Its not a political party nor a person but the consent that we all want to govern ourselves this way."

PIONEER MINUTE

Henry William Miller – 3rd Great Grandfather to Rees Petersen

The storied explorer John C. Fremont and his traveling companions initially documented their foray onto the Great Salt Lake with incredible optimism. The three largest islands are Antelope 42 sqm, Stansbury 18 sqm and Fremont 11 sqm. While paddling arduously in their small rubber craft in 1843, they observed that, "Several large islands raised their high rocky heads out of the waves; but whether or not they were timbered, was still left to our imagination...". When they explored one of the aforementioned "high rocky heads," they found an island populated with sagebrush, bunch grass, and a surprising lack of fresh water. After a day or two, Fremont dubbed his discovery "Disappointment Island."

While surveying the Great Salt Lake for the church in 1850, Captain Howard Stansbury, perhaps to Fremont's chagrin, changed the name of the formerly disappointing island to Fremont Island. Stansbury noted that the plentiful bunch grass and brackish water would be perfect for livestock.

In 1859, Henry William Miller, and his brother Daniel Arnold Miller, took 153 sheep and some cattle out to th e island and left them there. It seemed ideal – plenty of grass, adequate fresh water' and no wild beasts. So, no need to leave a herder. The brothers returned periodically to shear the sheep. Locals then recognized the island as "Miller Island." Seymour Miller, the grandson of Daniel Miller, recorded some of his experiences as a de facto ranch hand for the family ranching business on Fremont Island. They kept 2,000 sheep on the island and ferried themselves and their stock back and forth on the Lady of the Lake, a boat designed by Jacob Miller, Seymour's cousin. By now the sheep, left alone on the island for long stretches of time, were becoming wild as deer. One roundup, some sheep were so determined not to get caught that they took off swimming away from the island.

But the story really took a turn when a judge from Salt Lake, Uriah Wenner, asked to live on the island on account of his being diagnosed with tuberculosis. Subsequently, Uriah Wenner took advantage of the Desert Land Act intended to encourage irrigation and farming in the west. He filed a claim on the island and evicted the sheep. It was 1885, and Jacob Miller, now in charge of the Miller family sheep operation on the island was a polygamist "in hiding." He didn't dare go to court to challenge the claim.

The Millers were forced to move their herds to the mainland, where they continually lost woolies due to the sheep's feral nature that befuddled conventional herders. In his memoir, Seymour concluded that "we never got a dollar out of them."

After Wenner and his wife died, possession of the island changed hands without remarkable business or improvement until 2003. For a few years, Fremont Island underwent a small stint as a hunting ground for exotic livestock and then changed ownership until it landed in the hands of the State of Utah.

JOIN US AT THE TYHEE STAKE CENTER
12146 W. Tyhee Rd., Pocatello, Idaho
September 17-19, 2026

Schedule of Events

Thursday, September 17th

- Temple Sessions at 9:30 am, 10:30 am, and 11:00 am
  (arrive 30 minutes before each session)
- 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm Registration & activities at the Tyhee Stake Center, (DUP) - pioneer games, crafts, family history, local history, western night.
- 6:00 pm Welcome and Dinner
- 7:00 pm Speaker: Bryan Murray, retired judge speaking on Pocatello history, followed by entertainment - Boyd Murdock, Roy McKee (music), and Todd Andrus (cowboy poet)

Friday, September 18th

- 8:00 am Registration
- Full-Day and Half-Day Tours
- 6:00 pm Dinner and Guest Speaker
  Timothy J. Dyches, Emeritus 70 – more info
- Entertainment by Angel Tones

Saturday, September 19th

- 8:00 am National Board Members Meeting.
- 9:15 am Business Meeting for all SUP Members.
- 9:15 am Spouse's meeting: Jynnea Smedely, Speaker
- 10:15 am General Meeting, Catered Luncheon & Farewell

Lodging Options

Dump Station for campers 850 Barton Rd., Pocatello, ID – open May 15th through November 15th

Hotels and places to stay
Trip Advisor for Hotels & Places to Stay in Pocatello

Best Western
1415 Bench Rd.
Pocatello, ID
(208) 471-5212

- Theme –
"Gateway to the Northwest"

Full-Day Tours **(Box Lunch provided for each attendee)**

Friday, September 18th

1 - ATV Trail head at 9:30 am.
1st meet at 8200 West Portneuf Rd. at 9:00 am (Mink Creek Ward building Map). Then proceed as a group to the trailhead.

Scout Mtn. Rd. is located on the West side of Scout Mountain in the Bannock Range, just south of Pocatello, Idaho, within the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. It is accessed via the Mink Creek Recreation Area (South Fork of the Mink Creek Rd. off of the main Mink Creek Rd. via Bannock Hwy). The area features steep, forested terrain (Douglas fir, aspen) and is accessible by hiking and motorized trails, including high-clearance 4x4 trails. Important Note: Out of State attendees – get Idaho ATV permit from the Idaho Dept. of Parks and Recreation.

2 - Visit Malad-Samaria Area
- bus Leaves at 8:30 am
from the Tyhee Stake Center.

Home of the largest concentration of Welsh people outside of Wales. Visit the Oneida Museum in Malad and the Heritage Square in Samaria. Visit the original Olive Davis Osmond Cabin, mother of the famous Osmond family of performers.

Half-Day Tours (Instructions and maps provided)

Friday, September 18th

6a - Visit Idaho State University - 9:00 am in the Morning - personal auto to the ICCU Dome. (Celebrating 125 year anniversary) Visit Strategic Rocks, Performing Arts Center, EAMES Reactor Simulator.

6b - Visit Idaho State University - 1:00 pm in the Afternoon - personal auto to the ICCU Dome. (Celebrating 125 year anniversary) Visit Nuclear Reactor Lab, EAMES Reactor Simulator (Richard Lindsay – presenter) and the Performing Arts Center.

7a - Visit historic Pocatello - 9:00 am in the morning - personal auto to the Museum of Clean then visit the museum and historic ZCMI Memorial Building close by. More Info

7b - Visit historic Pocatello - 1:00 pm in the afternoon - personal auto to the Bannock County Museum. Visit the museum, and Fort Hall Replica then the miniature railroad. More Info

Full-Day Tours (continued)

Note: All buses leave at 8:30 am from the Tyhee Stake Center

3 - Visit historic Chesterfield townsite and Soda Springs.

More Info

4 - Visit Blackfoot, Idaho historic sites and Potato Museum, Sho-Ban Museum and Honey Bee operation.

More Info

5 - Visit American Falls Idaho historical sites – Register Rock, Massacre Rocks, Oregon Trail, Power County Museum and potato processing.

More Info

* Optional * - Print out, fill in sections below, then cut along line to separate and mail in. -

2026 SUP National Encampment
Register Online at: https://www.sup1847.com/store
or Print and Send this Form to:
SUP, 3301 E. Louise Ave., SLC, UT 84109 or Call Pat at SUP to Pay Over the Phone: (801) 484-4441

Full Name: _____

Spouse / Guest Name: _____

Address: _____

Mobile Phone: _____

Email: _____

SUP Member: Yes ○ No ○

Chapter Name: _____

Please indicate any physical limitations, dietary restrictions: _____

Registration Fee

○ Before Aug 15th): $105 x __ = $ _____
($50 for individual days)
○ After Aug 15th: $125 x __ = $ _____
($70 for individual days)
○ Thu. - Number of Attendee(s) ___
○ Fri. - Number of Attendee(s) ___
○ Sat. - Number of Attendee(s) ___

Tour Selection

Full – Day - Select 1 per attendee(s)
○ Tour 1: ATV Ride $30 _____
○ Tour 2: Malad/Samaria $60 _____
○ Tour 3: Chesterfield/S. S. $60 _____
○ Tour 4: Blackfoot, Sho-Ban $60 _____
○ Tour 5: American Falls $60 _____

Half – Day - Select 1 or 2 per attendee(s)
○ Tour 6a: ISU AM $15 _____
○ Tour 6b: ISU PM $15 _____
○ Tour 7a: Pocatello Tour AM $20 _____
○ Tour 7b: Pocatello Tour PM $20 _____

Grand Total: $ _____