



Bugle Calls



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

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President's Report March 2011

Hello

If you didn't get to make our February meeting, you missed a very good program.

Dr. Mays' PowerPoint presentation on Champ Ferguson was outstanding. It gave us a real look into the guerrilla situation in the Tennessee – Kentucky mountain area. Many of his examples were hair-raising.

Our executive committee met after the February meeting and came to the following decision. The dues structure for next year will be as follows: Individual membership will be \$20.00/ year. A family membership [this is defined as two people in a family] will be \$35.00. If a family has more than two people who want to become voting members of the round table the cost will be an additional \$10.00 per person. This decision will result in the Round Table receiving less income from membership funds, but it will take care of the concern that was raised over voting rights during the last election. If an individual wants to pay the family dues, they are more than welcome to make the contribution to the Round Table.

The committee discussed the possibility of purchasing a projector for the Round Table. Brian has been more than generous in loaning his projector for our meetings, but it was brought out that we can't just continue to rely on his willingness to loan us his projector. The Round Table owns an overhead projector, but very few, if any, presenters today use overheads as a means to give presentations. Most presenters have PowerPoint programs and it is unreasonable to expect our presenters to bring a projector with them. I have been looking into the cost of projectors and they run between \$500.00 and \$800.00 each. This is a lot of money, but I believe we need to consider the purchase of this type of equipment.

I am looking to you to give us some guidance on this issue. The amount of money we provide for speakers to make their presentation involves, for the most part, gas money and lodging for our out of town guests.

We have been providing \$50.00 for gas and food, but with the price of gas as it is, that will only get us people from as far away as Bakersfield or Modesto to come and make presentations before they have to come out of pocket to join us. They are doing us a favor by making time in their schedules to join us. It doesn't seem right to me to ask them to pay their own way.

What do you think we should do?

As the Sesquicentennial is upon us, I would like to suggest to you some interesting, but many times, little know places that are of real value and interest to Civil War enthusiasts. My first suggestion is the Civil War Naval Museum at Port Columbus, Ga. This very interesting museum is located on the Chattahoochee River at Columbus, Georgia.

One doesn't automatically think of naval warfare and the middle of Georgia in the same thought, but you would be wrong. The Confederates built iron clad warships in Columbus, but didn't have them completed by the time of a Union raid on Columbus in 1865. They set them on fire and let them drift down the Chattahoochee. The iron clad ships burned to the waterline and then sunk in the river. In the 1960's two ships were located and efforts were made to raise them. They were brought to Columbus and over time a wonderful museum was built to house them. In this museum you can find two Confederate iron clad ships which were put on display. The museum also has one of the best collections of large naval guns that I have ever seen. So if you are out and about in Georgia, travel a few hours south of Atlanta and take a look at this real gem. It will be well worth your while. Their website is www.civilwarnavalmuseum.com

As I said in my last report, March is share and tell for our members. If you don't have anything to share then the meeting will be very very short. Contact Patty and let her know what you want to present.

By the way, I am sorry but I will be missing in action for the March meeting. I have been asked to travel to Washington, D.C. and do some leg work on important legislation dealing with rural education. I have been working on this for some time and felt that I needed to continue this work. I'm sorry that I will miss the meeting, but Patty will be more than able to take my place.

AFTER ACTION REPORT SJVCWRT MEETING OF 2/10/11

By Ron Vaughan

We had 25 persons present for the meeting. Our speaker was Thomas Mays from Cal State, Humbolt. He has written a book Cumberland Blood, about Confederate guerilla Champ Ferguson. It is a name that few CW buffs recognize, but by the latter part of the war, everyone knew his name, because they read about him in the papers, and he was on the cover of Harper's Weekly.

CIVIL WAR HUMOR

From "Blue & Gray
Laughing"

After one of John Hunt Morgan's raids, authorities collected a number of worn-out cavalry horses that the raiders had left behind, and distributed them to local farmers who had horses stolen by the raiders. .

A few days afterward, a gentleman passing through the county was surprised to hear from a neighboring field the shrill sound of military commands: "Halt! File Left! Forward March!" He supposed that one of the Home Guard companies was drilling, but he discovered that it was only a farmer plowing with one of Morgan's cast-off cavalry horses.



Champ's home was in Scott County of the Cumberland Highlands of S.E. Ky.

His story was much like the history of the Hatfield and McCoy feud. He was an unsanctioned guerilla, making war on his Unionist neighbors. One psychiatrist labeled Champ a raving psychopath! Many have wondered why he became a killer. It was widely told that Union Home Guard members had ravished Champ's wife, but Champ denied it.

Politics determined the loyalties of the people in this region. Champ was a democrat, so he supported the South, while his brother's were Whigs, and had loyalty to the Union. Champ went south across the border into Tennessee, and joined local Southern guerillas. They raided Unionists in this area, as well as across the border in Ky. One of his first victims was William Frog, who had threatened to kill Champ. Champ entered the Frog home and shot William while he was helplessly sick in bed, right in front of Mrs Frog and their baby. This was typical of his murders, but his conscience never bothered him.

Whenever John Hunt Morgan or Basil Duke operated in Champ's area, they would utilize him and his "company" as guides. Duke described Champ as kind to his friends and vindictive to his enemies. He admitted to killing 32 men in 1862, but he said, "not nearly as many as they accuse me of killing." He often killed prisoners captured by Morgan's men.

In Oct. 1864, Champ was conscripted into Confederate service. During this time, he was involved in defending against a Union raid on Saltville. When the Union raiders were repulsed. Champ and his men murdered many of the prisoners and wounded, both black and white. General Breckinridge ordered the murders to stop, but he was ignored.

Champ even entered a hospital and shot Union wounded. Breckinridge wrote a letter of complaint to Lee. Lee was condemned the killings and ordered Champ's arrest. However, they could not find witnesses to testify against Champ. Finally the war ended and Champ slipped away. He returned home, but Sherman had him arrested and tried. He was found guilty of killing 53 men. This list did not include Blacks, as their names were unknown, but at least 63 Blacks were missing, that were believed to have been murdered by Champ. He was hung in Nashville on Oct. 25th, 1865.

NOTES FROM THE 2010 CWRT CONFERENCE IN SAN FRANCISCO

By Ron Vaughan

Craig Symonds spoke on the topic: "Was the US Navy Ready for War?"

The US Navy had 90 ships on register, but only 42 were active, and many of these were on foreign stations. Only 12 were avail-

SJVCWRT Meeting of February 10, 2011

Meeting starts 7:00 Pm

Walt gives treasures report balance \$2,490.42

Jonathon gave secretary's report

Mike green asked for volunteers for presentations

Mike introduced our speaker, Thomas D. Mays

Thomas began his presentation

Mike started the raffle

Meeting was adjourned at 8:14 pm

Officers Meeting of February 10, 2011

Meeting began at 8:24 pm

President Mike Green moved for membership dues be changed to \$20 for a single membership and family membership changed to \$35 for 2 people with a \$10 charge for every additional person

Vice President Patty Spencer seconded the motion

Discussion ensued, the vote was taken and the motion unanimously passed.

President Mike Green suggested the possibility of moving to a larger Denny's

Treasurer Walter Schulze recommended Golden Coral for a possibility as a new meeting place

President Mike Green discussed the possibility of buying a projector.

Past President David Davenport opposed the idea

President Mike Green

able for Atlantic service.

Naval Development:

In 1843, the USS Princeton was the first steam warship with propellers in the world. The “screws” were invented by Ericsson, but when one of the cannons exploded, killing the Secretary of the Navy, he was blamed (even though the gun was invented by Robert Stockton) and his ideas ignored for a long time. Eventually, the US built 3 side-wheel steamships, which were not very efficient, burning a ton of coal to go only 7.5 miles.

In 1854 the US Navy modernized when it built 6 screw ships, but it also built the last sailing warship, the USS Constellation. The 50 gun steam frigates were named after rivers, such as the Merrimac. In 1856 were built a new class of 11 smaller twin screw sloops, named after cities, such as the Hartford. The cost of these ships was \$1 million, and ironically, only narrowly gained the approval of Congress by the votes of the Southerners. In 1859, 6 more screw vessels of the Mohican class were built. These were the first to mount pivot guns.

Changes in Naval Ordinance:

The Paxhan Shell Gun was invented in France in the 1840s. Before this invention, there was little difference in naval cannon from the time of the Armada. Now the explosion of one shell could sink a ship. The range of a naval engagement with the old smoothbore guns was 100 yards, but the introduction of rifled cannon increased the range to 2,000 yards. The new Parrott, Rodman and Dahlgren guns made the US Navy better prepared. It used to be that a fort was stronger than a naval force, but the new guns could do more damage and steam power made them harder targets to hit.

150th ANNIVERSARY OF THE CIVIL WAR IS APPROACHING
Some observances are already under way. Some upcoming events are:

April 8-17, 2011 150th of the bombardment of Ft. Sumter-- Charleston will have a week of commemorative events and living history encampments.

July 22-24, 2011 150th Manassas-- Historical commemorations, demonstrations, music, and speakers.

August 12-14, 2011 150th Battle of Wilson’s Creek-- Re-enactment adjacent to the Battlefield Park.

We should take note that next year, Oct. 19-21, 2012, is the anniversary of the Vicksburg Campaign, with a re-enactment on the Raymond Battlefield Park, where we donated funds.

asked that all board members consider the possibility

President Mike Green proposed using a professional speaker from Charleston who asks for no gas or room payment to speak at one of our meetings

Board discussed out-reaching to the Selma and south Fresno area

Past President David Davenport moved to increase Thomas D. Mays travel stipend to \$100

President Mike Green seconded the motion

Discussion of gas prices and the travel expenses of speakers ensued

Board approves said motion

Meeting ends 8:45 pm



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