

BUGLE CALL ECHOES

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE
APRIL 2003 - VOL 11 ISSUE 4



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Hello again to all.

This month I would like to recognize the outstanding efforts of some of our very hard working members who make SJVCWRT such a great organization.

It was nice to see the return of Lydia Flores from an illness and a vacation. Lydia has been directing our publicity efforts and she is getting results as evidenced by our recent new members. Brian Clague has completed the scheduling of programs for this year and is already starting on the schedule for next year. Ken Moats always has the treasurers report ready at every meeting and also collects the money for meals and the drawings at the door each month. Barbara Moats does everything in the club that needs to be done that no one else volunteers for, and that is a lot. Last but not least, Charlie Jorgensen is already putting out a very professional newsletter each month.

There are other members who also go above and beyond to make this Round Table a wonderful organization, including but not limited to Mike and Gloria Carter, Dave Davenport, Linda Clague, Patty Spencer, Bill and Bette Head, Ron Markarian, Ron Vaughan, and others I'm sure I have forgotten. Thanks so much to all of you.

As always, your ideas and suggestions will only continue to make SJVCWRT better. Please see me, call me, or email me at Tom Carr <carr@sierratel.com> with your comments. Our membership is growing but we can all do more with a little extra effort.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming meeting and the return of Lee Meredith. Lee will be our guest speaker on "The Sultana Disaster." Let's have a nice turnout for Lee and this important but not too well known topic.

**HOW DO YOU LIKE OUR
NEW WEBSITE? GOTCHA!**

**WE DON'T HAVE A WEBSITE BUT WE
NEED ONE - HOW ABOUT A
VOLUNTEER WEBMASTER?**

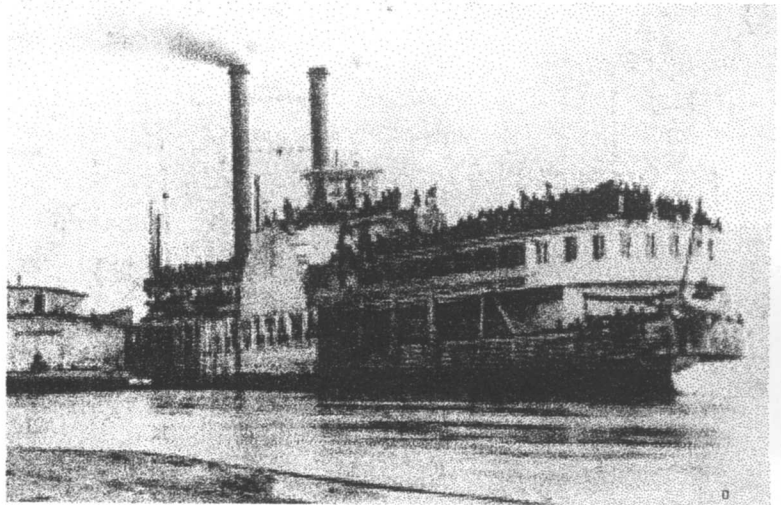
APRIL 24TH MEETING

Lee Meredith will give a talk on the little known "Sultana Disaster"

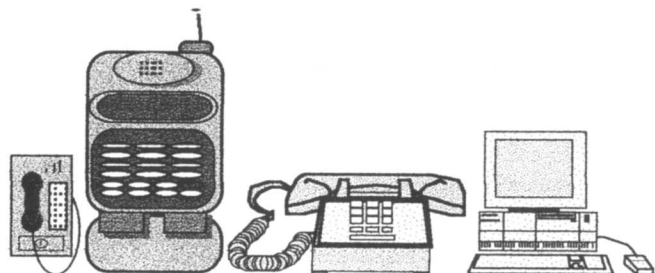
Ramada Inn - Shaw at Highway 41 - No-host
Social Hour 6PM - Dinner 7PM (\$16) -
Program at 8PM

Lee is a founder, former President and newsletter editor for the South Bay CWRT. Lee lives in San Jose and has spoken to our group before. He is the editor and compiler of the indispensable *Guide to Civil War Periodicals*. His talk will be on the little known maritime disaster that occurred shortly after Lincoln was shot.

Lee is active in all types of historical ventures and has recently published *1912 Facts about the Titanic*. He is well known to many of us as a bookseller. In addition he serves as a docent on the aircraft carrier Hornet.



FOR RESERVATIONS



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FILMS HAVE KEY ROLE IN EDUCATING YOUTH ABOUT HISTORY

by John O'Sullivan - Chicago Sun-Times February 25, 2003

In one powerful scene in Ron Maxwell's new film, "Gods and Generals," are summed up all the clashing loyalties of the Civil War. A young black woman - the house slave of a decent southern family that loves her, but a slave nonetheless - has loyally barred the Yankee invader from their home in Fredericksburg following their flight.

She relents during the battle, however, when the house is requisitioned for a field hospital. She tends the wounded and, comforting a dying Union soldier, she realizes that this man has come down from his safe home in the North to help free her and her children. Whereupon she changes sides.

What makes this scene so powerful, in addition to the eloquence of the writing, is that it pits the woman's natural affections against her sense of natural justice.

Maxwell's epic film is full of such moments. But this scene alone refutes the argument that "Gods and Generals" does not place sufficient emphasis on slavery as the sole cause of the war from the prospective of 2003.

Instead, "Gods and Generals" is true to the spirit of history. It enables us to see the cause and meaning of the war as those who fought and died saw those things. And they had many motives driving them into fratricidal strife - ending or sustaining slavery certainly, but also defending their homes against attack, fulfilling a patriotic duty of loyalty to their state, a desire to maintain the union at all costs, and so on.

Not only does Maxwell - assisted by superb performances from Stephen Lang as Stonewall Jackson and Robert Duvall as Robert E. Lee - convey why these men and women took the sides that they did; he also allows them to speak in the language of their time: sometimes with a grand Biblical eloquence, sometimes with the gentlemanly understatement of the officer class, sometimes quoting the literature with which educated men and women of that time were familiar.

This willingness to let speeches stretch to the length necessary to make an eloquent argument is an enormous artistic risk in today's tongue-tied Hollywood. As a dramatic device, however, it helps us to see that both Confederates and Unionists were significantly different people from our contemporary

elves - more uncomplicatedly religious, more rooted in the place they were born, more devoted to ideals of heroism and chivalry, relatively unconcerned about such things as economic growth.

Yet, though both sides talk relatively little about slavery and a great deal about liberty and patriotism, slavery continually intrudes into their lives and minds - to the Confederates as an unsettling reproach, to the Unionists as an uncomfortable justification - in scenes like that in which Jackson and his black army cook pray together for an enlightenment that may still have eluded the great general at his death.

Recall that "Gods and Generals" covers the early civil war in which the Confederacy enjoyed a string of military successes. It ends with the death of Jackson as a result of "friendly fire" in the hour of victory. Ahead, however, lies defeat for Lee at Gettysburg and the Confederacy's fall in the third film of the series, "The Last Full Measure." We will then see the terrible consequences for the Confederacy of its attachment to the "peculiar institution."

In the meantime, Americans need to know their own history - not as propaganda for how we see the world today but as an accurate remembrance of how it once was. Our schools churn out graduates who have only the remotest idea of U.S. history before the television age. In one test of 10 history students, only one student knew the First World War ended in 1918, and only two knew that the Second started in 1939. None knew the date for the battle of Waterloo (1815), women getting the vote in America (1920), or Hitler's rise to power (1933).

Given this almost heroic level of ignorance, it is highly unlikely that these students have any very clear idea of Lee, William Seward, Jackson, Ulysses S. Grant, or anyone else involved in the greatest conflict in American history, with the single exception of Abraham Lincoln who has managed to leap from the past into mythic status.

Yet, Lincoln himself praised the "the mystic chords of memory" as essential to the self-understanding of a nation. Since we can no longer rely on schools and colleges to transmit these memories to the coming generations, as we must rely on movies and videos to fill this national need. If those filmmakers who step up to the plate are as scrupulous as Maxwell in conveying the historical truth, we will have more

luck than we deserve.

Editors Note:

We finally found a good review for a good movie.

After Action Report 3/27/03

Our March meeting was another enjoyable evening, with 21 members present, including another grand new member, Rich Ruby, who came as a result of newspaper publicity. During the dinner, Dr. Clague stimulated the conversation with an open forum to discuss the recent CW movie and questions, such as: "Was Stonewall Jackson the victim of fragging?"

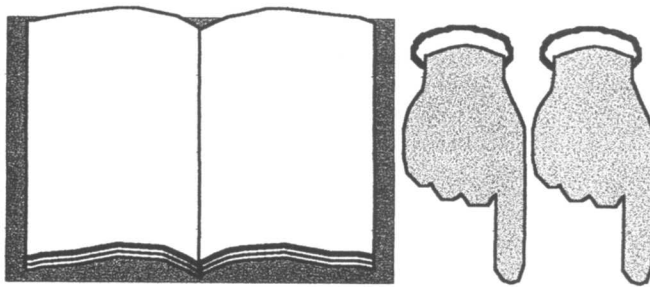
Our main speaker, was Tom Carr, who expounded on his long time interest in The Andrews' Raid, otherwise known as "The Great Locomotive Chase". He began his presentation with a clip from the old Disney Movie, starring Fess Parker. (I still can't believe Davy Crockett would steal a train!) Tom provided an interesting strategic view of the mission, which is often missing from accounts: The raid was part of General Mitchell's plan to attack Huntsville and move on Chattanooga. The raid began 4/12/62 when the train stopped for breakfast at Big Shanty (the breakfast cost \$.25 !!!). The chase ended in Union failure, 87 miles later, when "The General" was overtaken by the tenacious conductor, Andrew Fuller, who commandeered the engine, "Texas". Twenty of the raiders were captured, 6 escaped, 6 were exchanged, and 8 were executed by hanging. You can visit "The General" at Kennesaw and the "Texas" at the Atlanta Cyclorama. RON K VAUGHAN

DID YOU KNOW?

Our John Walker did it again taking a first place in the AP News Executives Council's annual contest honoring the best newswriting and photography by AP member newspapers in California and Nevada

Who is this guy and what is the ship?

See Page 4



SOME NEW READING FOR YOU:

- ◇ Hess, Earl J. *Lee's Tarheels: The Pettigrew-Kirkland-Macrac Brigade*. U. of N. Carolina Press, 2002. \$39.95
- ◇ Hewitt, Lawrence L. and Arthur W. Bergeron, Jr. *Louisianans in the Civil War* U. of Missouri Press, 2002. \$32.50
- ◇ Holzer, Harold, ed. *State of the Union: New York and the Civil War*. Fordham U. Press, 2002. \$40.00: Pbk. \$20.00
- ◇ Hunley, C. Russell, ed. *The 14th U.S. Infantry in the American Civil War - John Young Letters* White Maine Publ. Co. , 2003 Pbk. \$9.95

AN INTERESTING WEBSITE:

WWW.CivilWarAlbum.com

A website with a wide selection of Civil War items from the list of the crew members of the U.S. Cairo to 4300 modern photos of Civil War sites, over 200 battlefield panoramas, many official records and maps.

HELP WANTED:

Barbara Moats would like to buy a paperback copy of Thomas Connelly's "The Marble Man." If anyone has one they would like sell please bring it to the meeting.

ALSO DID YOU KNOW?

Chuck Bailey, a long time member of the SJVCWRT, had a very nice article in the Bee, written about him and his book, *Disaster at the Colorado: Beales Wagon Road and the First Emigrant Party*, Published in 2002 by the Utah State University Press. It is a story about Chuck's great grandparents and others who were first to travel a route mapped by Edward Fitzgerald Beale, a retired Navy lieutenant. The route is later known as Route 66. Getting a book published is no small feat considering that Utah Press publishes less than 1 out of 10 inquiries. Nice going Chuck. The book is available at Fig Garden Bookstore or can be ordered thru Barnes & Noble, Borders, or Amazon.com.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2003

President	Tom Carr	Dave Davenport	Director
Vice President	Brian Clague	Patricia Spencer	Director
Ken Moats	Treasurer	Bob Quist	Director
Barbara Moats	Secretary	Gloria Carter	Alternate
Charles Jorgensen	Newsletter	Mike Carter	Past President
Lydia Flores	Publicity		

PHOTOS FROM PAGE 2 - CSA "VIRGINIA" & JOHN MAFFITT COMMANDER OF CSA "FLORIDA"

MEMBERSHIP FORM MEMBERSHIP YEAR - JANUARY TO DECEMBER

Please begin/renew my membership in the San Joaquin Valley Civil War Round Table
My membership category is checked below:

-----Individual \$25 -----Family \$35 -----\$10 Student or Newsletter
\$5 OF EACH MEMBERSHIP GOES TOWARD CIVIL WAR BATTLEFIELD PRESERVATION

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

Any Specific area of Civil War interest? _____

Bring this membership form and your check to a meeting or mail to:

SJVCWRT
PO BOX 5695
FRESNO, CA 93755

