

“The Late Unpleasantness”

January 2010



South Bay Civil War Round Table

January 24th Meeting Speaker:
Mary Deborah Petite on “The Women Will Howl”

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President's Message

Our November meeting turned into a double header: We had a comprehensive presentation by Rene Accornero on “Lee’s Retreat from Gettysburg,” as well as the recognition of our own SBCWRT members who, in the past two years, have made major contributions to Civil War history with the publication of their books.

Earlier in the year, a recommendation was made to establish an annual award or recognition of our members who have been published. A motion was put before the members that “the SBCWRT establish an annual book prize for any member of our Round Table who publishes a book on some

aspect of Civil War history. The prize will be a \$100 donation from our Round Table treasury to a battlefield or site of the author’s designation.” The motion was approved.

A second motion was made that “the Author(s) of the Year prize be awarded as follows: For the year 2008 - Deborah Petite, for The Women Will Howl. For the year 2009 - Gary Yee, for Sharpshooters: The Men, Their Guns, Their Story, and Helen Trimpi for Crimson Confederates: Harvard Men Who Fought for the South. This motion was also unanimously approved. For additional information on the authors and their books, please visit our web site, SBCWRT.com.

January Mary Deborah Petite, author of *The Women Will Howl*, a history of the arrest and deportation of the mill workers of Roswell and New Manchester, Georgia, after those towns were captured by Sherman's Union army in July 1864. Information about Deborah and her book can be found at www.women-will-howell.com/book.

February Mr. Jerry Hening, who has given his talk about Abraham Lincoln to the Peninsula, San Francisco and Sacramento Civil War Round Tables, will be our featured speaker on the 23rd.

Scheduled Speakers

January: Mary Deborah Petite on "Women Will Howl"

February: Jerry Henig on "Lincoln at 200"

Summary of November Presentation: **Rene Accornero's talk on "Retreat from Gettysburg"** submitted by R. Lawrence Comstock

Rene talked about the massive efforts of General Robert Lee and his command as they sought to move people, equipment and scavenged supplies back to Virginia after being defeated at Gettysburg. More than 57 miles of wagons and ambulance trains and tens of thousands of live stock accompanied the army back to Virginia. The adverse conditions of the driving rain and muddy quagmires were described as General Meade attempted to attack the trains. Battles were fought at South mountain, Hagerstown and Williamsport but Lee's skillful use of terrain and defenses allowed him to escape. Washington's criticism and unhappiness of Gen. Meade was also discussed. Meade's failure to destroy the Army of Northern Virginia prolonged the war for two more years.

Preview of February Talk

Lincoln at 200 – In Fact Rather than Fiction

As we commemorate the bicentennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, our 16th president remains an enigmatic figure shrouded in myth and legend. Many questions still surround this well-loved but perplexing man. For example, Lincoln had less than a year of formal education: How did he achieve such literary grandeur? Lincoln was a commander in chief with no military training or experience: How did he prove so effective? He opposed the abolitionist movement: How did he become the great emancipator? By focusing on Lincoln as orator, advocate of freedom commander of Union forces, and wartime political leader, Professor Gerald Henig will help us separate fact from fiction in order to understand better this uncommon common man.

Bio Blurb

Gerald S. Henig is emeritus professor of history at California State University, East Bay, where he received the Outstanding Professor Award and was a four-time winner of the Pi Kappa Delta Best

Lecturer Award. After graduating from Brooklyn College, Jerry earned his M.A. from the University of Wisconsin and his Ph.D. in American history from the Graduate Center, City University of New York. His most recent book, Civil War Firsts: The Legacy of America's Bloodiest Conflict, was a selection of the nationally prestigious History Book Club and the Military Book Club. In April 2007, the book was published in a paperback edition, with a new format, a generous number of photos and illustrations, and a new title: A Nation Transformed: How the Civil War Changed America Forever. (Autographed copies will be available for purchase at the conclusion of the talk).

SBCWRT Authors Series

The Women Will Howl: The Union Capture of Roswell and New Manchester, Georgia, and the Forced Relocation of Mill Workers

Mary Deborah Petite, a member of our Round Table since 1992, describes herself as a "long time student of 19th century American military history with a special interest in the Civil War and the Texas Revolution." Her previous book, 1836 Facts About the Alamo and the Texas War for Independence, is currently in its second printing. It was during a brief visit to Roswell, Georgia in 1998, that she first heard about the arrest and deportation of the Confederate women who were working in the mills when the town was captured by Sherman's Union army in August, 1864.

Intrigued by the story she began a personal journey into time and history which included eight months in Roswell "researching local history and visiting historic buildings and mill ruins, with side trips to Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and Ohio."

Her search for primary and unpublished documents expanded to the Library of Congress, the National Archives, and Carlisle Barracks in Pennsylvania. As described by her publisher, after six years of research and writing "dispelling myth and mystery, The Women Will Howl presents a true and accurate history of this unforgettable story." For more information go to women-will-howl.com/book.

Preservation Report

In the spirit of our recent talks in October and November concerning Gettysburg and Lee's retreat, this report addresses current efforts at the battlefield's preservation, edited from an article by Jim Campi of Civil War Preservation Trust – editor.

NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD GROUP ANNOUNCES FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT HALLOWED GROUND AT GETTYSBURG

Privately held land lies along the Emmitsburg Road, at the heart of the Gettysburg Battlefield

(Gettysburg, Pa.) – The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), America's largest nonprofit battlefield preservation group, today announced a fundraising campaign to preserve a crucial in-holding on the Gettysburg Battlefield. Originally part of the historic Philip Snyder farm, the property lies directly along the Emmitsburg Road and today is entirely surrounded by Gettysburg National Military Park. The two-acre parcel, located only a half mile from Little Round Top and due west of Devil's Den, has been a top land acquisition priority for historians and preservationists for many years.

Purchasing this land has been such a priority for the National Park Service that it already had funds on hand, approved by Congress, for the effort. But in late 2009, when the landowners expressed a desire to sell, the

property, which also includes two modern homes, appraised well beyond the park's ability to pay. Acting quickly, before a new private landowner could purchase and further develop the property, CWPT stepped in and put it under contract. After closing, CWPT will in turn sell the land to the National Park Service for \$300,000, the sum initially allocated by the federal government.

Transferring such historic land to a responsible stewardship entity, like the National Park Service, is always CWPT's ultimate goal when it secures a significant section of the battlefield. And in this case, finally taking possession of this land will be a long-anticipated victory for the park, allowing for greater interpretation and access along this portion of the battlefield. According to interim superintendent J. Mel Poole, "This will help the National Park Service restore the Phillip Snyder farm, the scene of Confederate battle lines and the advance on the Union positions at Devil's Den on July 2, 1863."

(CWPT president James) Lighthizer ...stressed the land's historic pedigree. "Nearly a third of the Union Army marched right by — and likely across — this property as they double-quickened up the Emmitsburg Road into Gettysburg on July 1, 1863. They had no idea they were rushing headlong into the bloodiest battle of the entire war. The next day, this land stood just a few dozen yards from the Confederate line, and saw the beginning of the assaults that would end in blood at the Wheatfield and Devil's Den. It is not often — if ever — that we who care about saving America's Civil War battlefields get the opportunity to save something so important."

Special Announcement from Civil War Living History

We are having another event at Fort Point on Jan 30-31st 2010. We will have the best turnout of reenactors (with fife/drum band and brass band) on Saturday Jan 30th. We think this will be another great educational event for the public. If you can come, parking will be tight...so please try to carpool! If you have any questions, feel free to call! Mike Musante, Event Coordinator 650-312-8422

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