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Monthly newsletter of the San Diego Civil War Round Table

President Bill Peck
Vice Pres/Membership Dave Tooley
Vice Pres/Programs Dave Taylor
Secretary Mike Schooling
Treasurer Paul Champlin
Chaplain Jordan Detzer
Librarian Al Haun
Publicity: Veronica Parry
Battlefield Preservation: Carla Schwartz
Skirmish Line Editor Mark Carlson

July Meeting

On JULY 27th 1994, on the 4th Wednesday of the month the SDCWRT will hold its 102nd meeting at the Reuben H. Fleet Space Theatre lecture Hall at 7:00 p.m. The presentation will be of Sibley's New Mexico Campaign of 1862, by Charles Pickett of the SDCWRT. Now we can learn more about this little-known but fascinating far-western campaign in our own backyard, so to speak.

June Meeting The 101st meeting of the SDCWRT was a wow! Rich Rollins, Greg Biggs and George Otott of the LBCWRT gave us a very interesting and highly entertaining debate of the oft-discussed subject: Which theatre of the war was more important to its outcome - East or West? Greg Biggs took the Western theatre side and George Otott sided with the Eastern,

and Rich Rollins moderated. I enjoyed this presentation highly, as I am sure most of the members did. The decision? Still hotly debated, and will be for all time to come, of course.

Plaques to be awarded each month

Carla Schwartz, Preservation Chair, will be making beautiful plaque to be given each succeeding month to the speaker(s) of the previous month's meeting, as a thank you gesture of the SDCWRT.

Disney Protest

Rich Rollins of the LBCWRT proposed a protest at Disney HQ in Anaheim on the 2nd weekend of August against the construction of Disney America in Haymarket, Virginia. More will be discussed on this at the July meeting.

Its a Battlefield, after all. . .

By Mark Carlson

You know, most of us have grown up with Disney in our lives. It has become as much a part of us as baseball, politics and taxes. It is hard to even think of what this country would be like without the wonderful world that Unca Walt created. I love Disneyland and the good, warmhearted feeling I get when I think of the dedication and dreams of Walter Elias Disney. A contemporary philosopher once remarked that Walt Disney had done more for genuine human happiness than all the religions of the world.

That may or may not be, but now there is a great deal of Unhappiness connected with the Disney name, and what it will mean in the near future to the places of our historical past. The Disney Corporation intends, by hook or crook, to build a \$650 million, 3,000 acre american history theme

park right smack in the middle of one of the most history-rich areas in Virginia.

Within 3 miles of the site is Manassas Battlefield, and all around the area, known as Virginia's Piedmont are dozens of priceless historic places that include more battlefields, presidents' birthplaces, colonial homes and beautiful hills and valleys.

Now, I am as strong a proponent of the teaching of history as anyone and I feel that Disney has the right idea, but they have the wrong place. This needs to be done, especially when you consider that there are 16 states in this country that DON'T require the teaching of American history through high school. This is a travesty, my friends, and if Disney wants to build a park in which they will portray history, and particularly Civil War history, accurately and entertainingly, I say, go for it. But do it

somewhere else. There are hundreds of suitable sites in neighboring states that would benefit immensely from the project without endangering the scarce and precious sites of our nation's past. There is enough of history in the Piedmont. We don't need a mouse and a . uh, . whatever Goofy is, to teach it while literally millions of people, hundreds of strip malls, gas stations, motels, car rental agencies, laundromats and 7-11s trample the fragile and priceless regional heritage.

I hope the Disney Corporation has the good sense to show us that they are worthy of our love and devotion to the wonderful world of Disney. I don't believe Unca Walt would have done it this way.

The Editor

The Third Inaugural Address

By Bill "Abe" Peck

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you for this calling. These are the words of the great emancipator. Now, let me tell you, news of my death have been grossly exaggerated. It is an honor indeed to have been selected to preside over such a distinguished organization.

There is no greater pleasure than serving those with whom you share a common interest. As Lincoln so aptly put it, with the help of that divine Being and your prayers I shall succeed.

Rich, I thank you for a magnificent job this past year. We have seen the Roundtable grow both in stature as well as in numbers. That only comes about when we have members with positive attitudes and wish to help each other. The West Coast Conference was a resounding success and one that our entire Roundtable can be proud of. You have handed over the reins of a healthy, vibrant group. With continued support like that it certainly will make the job easier. And what a great

Do you know me? Sometimes, when I go to the theatre, people fail to recognize me. That's why I always carry the American Express Card. Don't restore the Union without it!

board to work with. Thank you all!

Members have asked me what I am going to change, and my first thought is the single word "nothing." "If it ain't broke, don't tinker with it." However, we all have different thoughts and goals to look for and I have an inclination to make this a year of growth by gaining new members. We have always done

well but it is something that we cannot cease doing. With the continued interest by the media and public in the Civil War we should be able to add new members.

It would be a great coup if our Roundtable were to take a greater interest in promoting the Memorial Day Service at Mt. Hope Cemetery. I would really enjoy going to all Civil War veterans graves at Mt. Hope and putting flags on each and every grave marked. What a simple way to honor the memory of those we study and the real reason we gather together.

In conclusion let me say that I am looking forward to a y'ar of fun an' l'arnin. I sure wish I had George back to kick around!

William "Abe" Peck

Preservation News

by Carla Schwartz

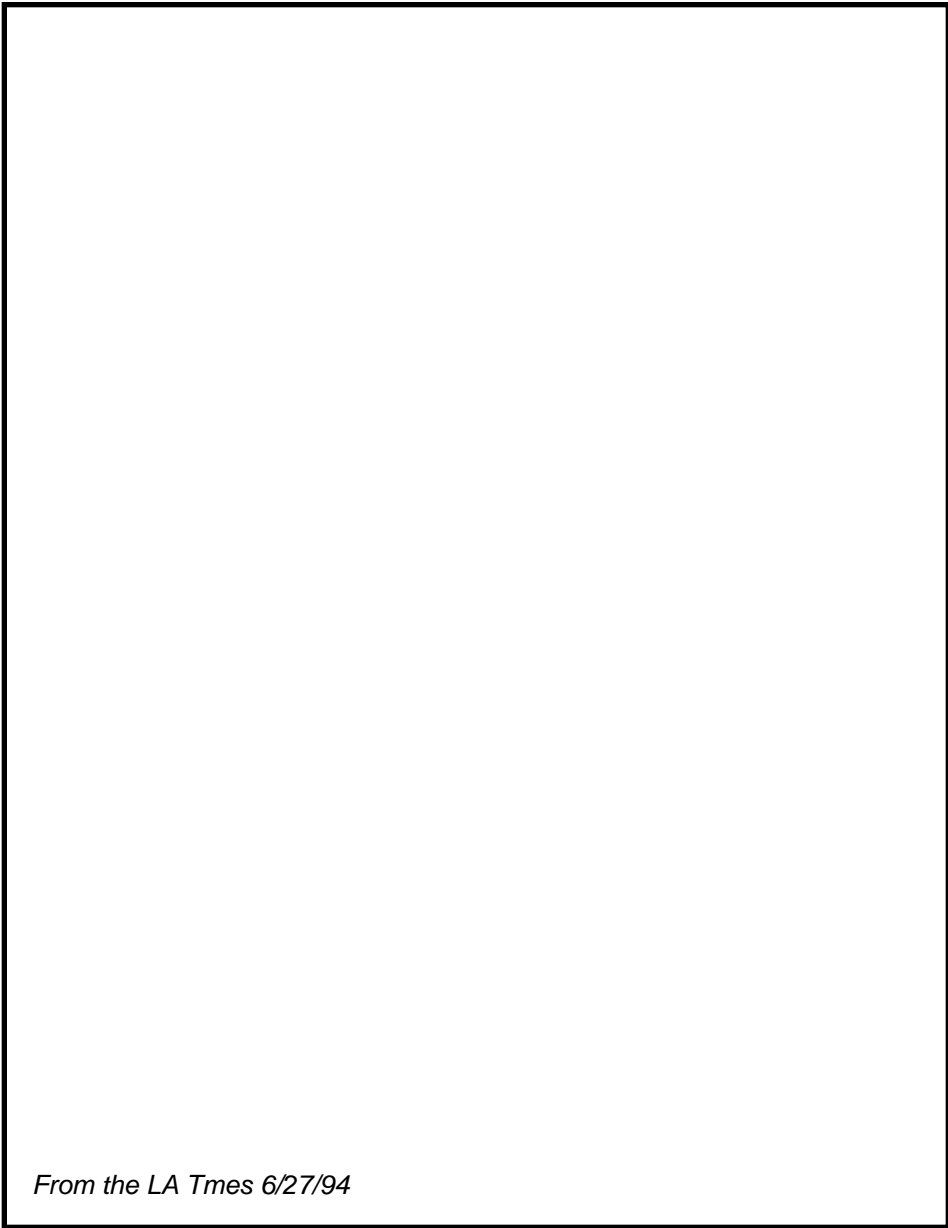
As you know, the Walt Disney Corporation has planned a theme park, "Disney's America," in the Haymarket area of northern Virginia. The project would be located on a 3,000 acre site, the boundaries of which would be within four miles of the Manassas National Battlefield Park. The project would consist of a 100-acre American history theme park, 2,500 or more housing units, 2 million or more square feet of commercial space, 1,300 hotel rooms, two golf courses, a water park and a 283-site campground for tents, cabins and recreational vehicles. Disney expects to draw 5 million visitors a year when the park opens in 1998, and plans to invest \$1 billion for other commercial ventures in the area.

As we have learned from our long association with the Brandy Station preservation efforts, the areas outside the Washington, D.C. perimeter are being developed at an alarming rate. And the Disney project would certainly destroy the rolling hills, pastures, farms, free-flowing streams, and other scenic beauty that has remained essentially unspoiled for centuries. The area in close proximity to the Disney project includes 22 Civil War battlefields, six of which (according to *Civil War News*), have been identified as requiring prompt protective measures.

Many prominent historians, such as Shelby Foote, James McPherson, (as well as) Ken Burns, and David McCollough, to name a few, have gone on record as vehemently opposing the Disney project.

McCollough decried "Disney's intentions to build synthetic history by destroying real history." In referring to the rural area, with such name as Bull Run and Rappahannock, which would be spoiled, he said, "They are the real thing, and what shame we will bring on ourselves if we destroy them."

Shelby Foote said "that the Disney people will do to American history what they have already done to the animal king-



From the LA Times 6/27/94

dom - sentimentalize it out of recognition.

Vann Woodward, another historian, said, "If we permit the Walt Disney Co. to commercialize the area of 16 Civil War battlefields in northern Virginia for tourist trade profits, we will forfeit our respect for

our past and much of our self-respect as well."

Ken Burns had this to say: "The area doesn't need any more history superimposed on it (continued on next page)



This park is simply not needed here. It is in the wrong place. It will distract visitors from the real places of history, and it will damage the beauty and character of the area.”

A group has been formed called PROTECT HISTORIC AMERICA. The group aims to protect the entire Piedmont region of northern Virginia. They want Disney’s theme park moved to an already developed area.

Another group, SAVE THE BATTLEFIELD COALITION, has suggested some things concerned Americans can do:

1. Write or call Disney’s President:

Michael Eisner
The Walt Disney Co.
500 S. Buena Vista
Burbank, CA 91521-1000
Phone: 818-955-8214

2. Send postcards to your Senators and Congressmen and ask them to stop Federal approval of an I-66 interchange for Disney. Tell them you don’t want to pay \$49 million to fund and maintain an interchange for a private multi-billion dollar corporation, and their silent multi-billion dollar partner, Exxon. (Remember the *Exxon Valdez*)

3. Write letters protesting Disney’s America in Virginia to the editors of:

The San Diego Union-Tribune

Potomac News
14010 Smoketown Road
Woodbridge, VA 22192

The Journal Messenger
9009 Church St.
Manassas, VA 22110

The Prince William Journal
13199 CentrePoint Way
Dale City, VA 22193

USA Today
PO Box 500
Washington, D.C. 20044

Senator Dale Bumpers
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

And a big thanks to all of you who signed the petitions which I mailed to the Save the Battlefield Coalition. We had fifty signatures. The petitions will be delivered to Disney, with copies sent to our representatives on Capitol Hill.

Thanks,
Carla Schwartz

Chaplain’s Corner

By Jordan Detzer

The Challenge of Patriotism

I called my son and his wife in Phoenix tonight. Their second baby was a week overdue. My 3-year old grandson, Noah, told me, “Grandpa, the new baby hasn’t come out yet.” My son completed the summary of the late arriving baby, Paul. I was thinking that a lot of family values and patriotism haven’t come out yet, either. After the great 50th Anniversary of D-Day, we begin to get a feel for what the ancient Psalmist wrote in

Chapter 137:5. “If I forget thee, Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.”

The Fourth of July is a great time for celebrating the freedom of our country. It’s our “coming-out party” every year. It is a time for both north and south, east and west to reconsecrate our true patriotism. It is a sacred time.

The Psalmist was far from home and in captivity in a strange land. The greatest value in his mind was his own land, country and home. He had been asked to sing a song of his native land while in captivity. This man of Biblical times was willing to consecrate his all for the love of his country.

All of us are challenged to remember the values that are included in patriotism - all of those things which have made our country great and which we would be willing to die to protect. There is something Divine in love for one’s country. Religion and family values are woven together, and it is time to bring them out in our patriotism and love for our country.

Prayer: Eternal God, we trust You. Help us to keep our sacred trust from our fathers. Bless those who keep their family ties strong and those who defend our land. Strengthen our new officers for the coming year and give them wisdom and courage. May we be good workers in our round table. Amen.

Gratefully with love from your chaplain,

Jordan

P.S. If there is any one ill or bereaved, let me know.

