

# NEWSLETTER

## Friends of Civil War Alcatraz

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Special Edition

EDITOR: Steve Johnson

**Living History Day on Alcatraz** Despite the drizzly weather, over 60 people, composed of re-enactors, NPS volunteers, and FOCWA members showed up for the spring Living History Day on April 9th. Members of the National Civil War Assn. and the American Civil War Assn. came to portray the soldiers who would have been stationed on Alcatraz during the Civil War. Besides doing sentry duty and military drills, the soldiers engaged the visitors who wanted to know about their uniforms and their purpose when the island was a fort. The Third Artillery Band was also there, sporting their brass insignia supplied by FOCWA ; the band leader's jacket was also paid for by our organization. The band played as the boats were docking on the island and serenaded those who wished to hear tunes of the period.

### Dates to Remember

**Monday, May 30, 2016**

**Memorial Day Parade**

Presidio of San Francisco, 10:30 am on the Main Post

**June 7 -10**

Interpretive Training Skills for volunteers (contact Ranger Lori)



We were delighted that the grandsons of members Phil Blake and Chuck Gardali participated this year; in fact, they were doing cannon demonstrations with the public on their own for awhile!



Here Gavin Boone (just out of camera range) and Jude Munoz are showing a visitor how to fire the howitzer. These young men did a splendid job engaging with the public and knowing the protocols for preparing, loading, and firing a canon.

New this year was a scenario enacted by Nikki Rottender, an actor who was recruited to play the Mayor of San Francisco of 1860. As Mayor Henry Techemacher, Nikki read a “Proclamation to the Citizens of San Francisco” as visitors were starting their walk up the hill from the dock. The proclamation read as follows:

Citizens of San Francisco,

Now that we are engaged in a Civil War, I want to reassure you that the city is well protected by Army troops at the Presidio, Fort Point, and here on Fort Alcatraz. As you can see by your visit here, the troops are in a state of readiness, and fully prepared to deal with invasion from the sea or rebellion from within. I urge you to be vigilant, and if you



see or hear any remarks or actions that are against the Union cause, report these to the authorities.

I also urge you young men to rally to the cause by enlisting in the California volunteer regiment. Men are needed to staff the forts in the West to keep the peace between the settlers and the Indians, and to put down any rebellions from Confederate sympathizers. There are enlistment tables set up today, and officers can sign you up immediately.

Finally, let us show President Lincoln that San Francisco is fully committed to the Union cause by holding a rally in the central square of the business district. I propose to name this area forever after as Union Square. Let us with one voice say "The Union, Forever!" Thank you.



Now whether the mayor at that time ever visited the island or issued such a proclamation is moot; but this scenario was intended to give the visitors a feel for the tenseness of the time, the appeal for patriotism, and the Union sentiment of San Francisco's citizens (most of them, anyway). During the request for recruits, one young lad was pulled from the crowd by the Sergeant and put into the ranks, where he was given a musket and hat. This delighted the crowd - and also his parents!



The Mayor inspecting the troops



An exhibit of medical tools and medicines

A favorite exhibit of visitors was the medical display that was set up in the guard room of the sally port. People are always curious to see the rather sophisticated instruments used for operations in the 1860's, the herbal remedies used, and to hear how operations were performed in those days. They learned that most of the deaths in the Civil War were caused by disease, not by wounds.



Member Constance Smith leads a tour of the Citadel for the re-enactors. Note the Union Army hardhats.

Our thanks to members John Nevins for organizing the event, Fred Bohmfalk and Brad Schall for the lunches, Bob Hubbs, Phil Blake, Greg Tracy, for helping in the kitchen, Chuck Gardali and Walter Page for cannon demos, Don Wilt and Steve Boggart for soldiers' exhibits, Constance Smith and Steve Johnson for Fort tours, Jim Lundsten for portraying Gen. Wright.

Our thanks to NPS volunteer Tim Brazil for all the photos he took of this event.

**Memorial Day Parade** If you would like to help represent FOCWA at the Memorial Day parade and ceremony on May 30th at the Presidio, please contact Steve Johnson at [sfwalkingtours@gmail.com](mailto:sfwalkingtours@gmail.com)