

Friends of Civil War Alcatraz

Board of Directors Meeting (Virtual) April 9, 2022

Present: Gary Hormel (Co-chairman), Steve Johnson (Co-chairman), Evelyn Mar (Treasurer), Jeffrey Vaillant, John Fitzpatrick, George Foxworth, Mike Bennett, Steve Bogart

A quorum of 5 was met. Secretary Constance was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

Meeting notes taken by Steve Johnson

Summary of the February meeting was given and the minutes as posted on the website was approved.

Treasurer Evelyn reported we currently have 23 members and a bank balance of \$7,059 in checking and \$1,418 in savings.

Steve provided an update about Alcatraz. Mask mandates have been lifted except for travel on the ferry boat to the island. Attendance on the island has been rising; weekend tickets are usually sold out weeks in advance. Volunteers have been giving many of the programs and Gary, Steve, and Constance have been giving Fort Alcatraz programs since January with good attendance.

Fort Point will have a Living History Day in August, probably on the last Saturday. Details are still being worked out with the rangers there. Steve will approach the head ranger on Alcatraz soon about having a Living History Day on the island this summer.

Steve had asked for funds to buy four several important history books for the rangers on the island having to do with California, and San Francisco, during the Civil War. He has decided instead to bequeath his copies to the island's library.

Steve Bogart was welcomed back as a member and he has agreed once again to submit information about Civil War events around the Bay Area to the Activities page of our website. He also volunteered to be our chaplain, which he has done for many years for re-enacting groups. (This is an actual role as counselor to the members of FOCWA).

We discussed ways to recruit more members to our organization. Among them were

- passing out FOCWA brochures/cards to local visitors to Alcatraz and Fort Point
- providing these also at Living History events around the Bay Area
- giving talks about Alcatraz to various organizations such as SIRS, Rotary Clubs, Legion Posts, retirement communities, etc. (Note: Any FOCWA member could do this at least once a year to help our organization — topics could include the history of Alcatraz, or the role of volunteers on the island, or the Indian occupation, etc.)

We had a brief discussion about re-enactments and the showing of the Confederate flag during mock battles. Apparently some public parks are not allowing the flying of the Confederate flag even when a historical battle is being re-nacted. However, John Fitzpatrick — a licensed guide at Gettysburg National Military Park — said that is not the case at Gettysburg. Nor is it the case when these reenactments are held on private property, such as the one at Duncans Mills.*

At the end of the meeting Gary Hormel gave a short presentation about Appomattox Court House National Historic Park in Virginia, where at the McLean house General Lee surrendered to General Grant. Gary had visited the park several years ago and wanted to share photos highlighting some of the displays there, including:

- a towel used for the flag of surrender by the Confederates
- the actual document of surrender
- the table on which the document was signed
- a painting of the surrender (one famous painting of that event shows Gen. Custer at the signing; in reality he was outside chatting with some Confederate officers even though Gen. Lee had asked him not to do so before the formal surrender had taken place)
- Lee's sword, which Grant allowed him to keep

It was a brief but interesting look at a famous Civil War site and our thanks to Gary for sharing his photos with us.

The next board meeting (virtual) will be Saturday, June 11, 2022, at 10 a.m.

*Jeffrey posted the link to information about the Duncans Mills event, one of the largest in Northern California. <https://facebook.com/Civil-War-DaysDuncans-Mills-148190895195514/>