

# BATTLELINES



A Bimonthly Newsletter of the San Pasqual Battlefield Volunteer Association

VOL. XXV, No 1

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2012

15808 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido, CA 92027 - 760-737-2201

## CALENDAR

Happy New Year!

**Tues, January 17**

History Discussion,  
Escondido Library, 3:30 to  
5:30 pm, *Lee's Ferry*, contin-  
ued, led by Jim Newcom

**Fri, January 27**

Board Meeting, 11 am-1 pm

**Sat, January 28**

Mormon Battalion Day, Old  
Town SHP, 10 am-4 pm

**Sun, February 5**

Living History, Park

**Tues, February 21**

History Discussion,  
Escondido Library, 3:30 to  
5:30 pm, Civil Disorders in  
the US, led by Ron Hinrichs

**Fri, February 24**

Board Meeting, 11 am-1 pm



**BATTLE DAY 2011:  
Not your usual day in  
San Pasqual Valley**



**Californios and U.S. Dragoons  
meet, marking 165 years since  
the Battle of San Pasqual**

Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf & Melvin Sweet

**SPBVA 2012  
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MEMBERS**

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acting until new  
officers are elected  
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*Tom Vilicich  
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Ron Hinrichs  
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tus:*

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Ron Hinrichs*

**President's Message:**



**by Tom Vilicich**

Amazing support! This year's battle reenactment had the most reenactors participating that we have seen in many years. The Dragoons were outnumbered about 3 to 1. As a rider with the Dragoons, I must say that seeing the Californios coming at us in line of battle with their superior numbers was intimidating, to say the least. This is the kind of odds the men who rode with General Kearny faced 165 years ago.

I want to extend a big THANK YOU to all of the volunteers and State Park staff for making this year's reenactment the success that it was. I cannot say it enough. THANK YOU!!!

As most of you know by now, San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park is scheduled to be closed July 1, 2012. At this year's Battle Day we had three preaddressed postcards with our "SAVE OUR STATE PARK—SAVE OUR SAN PASQUAL" message on it along with room to put your own short message to the people in the state who could give our cause a voice in Sacramento. We at SPBVA thank all who

came out to Battle Day for your support and for signing these cards. We had people from all over Southern California as well as Colorado and Michigan lend their support. If you missed out on the opportunity to sign these postcards, we still have some available at the park visitor center. If you have a chance, stop by and fill them out and we'll send them to Sacramento. If we get closed down, let's go down fighting!

The State Park administration, along with SPBVA's board members, are looking for a sponsor who can come up with the money to keep the park open. There are a few interested parties, but nothing firm as of yet. So we will keep working on that.

As for activities at the park, they will continue as if we are not under threat of closure. So come out to our First Sunday living history day on the first Sunday of each month through June. The school programs and other special group tours will continue as usual. You can find contact information in *Battlelines*. Thank you for your support.

**S O S P  
SAVE OUR STATE PARK  
SAVE OUR SAN PASQUAL**

**one of the earliest California State Parks,  
established 1918**

*Thanks to these loyal members for their renewals:*

- *Buskirk, Shirley* *Escondido*
- *Clifford, Royce & "Cliff"* *Encinitas*
- *Foucar, Barbara & Allen* *Escondido*
- *Hardy, Willis* *San Juan Capistrano*
- *Hill, Greg* *Yucca Valley*
- *Joy, D. Duncan* *Alexandria, VA*
- *Snashall, Bob* *Washington, D.C.*
- *Wiesemann, Ken* *Stockton*

**Park Hours:**  
Saturday &  
Sunday, 10 am  
to 5 pm.

**Park Phone  
Number:**  
(760) 737-2201

**SPBVA Info:**  
Tom Vilicich  
(951) 674-0185 or  
Trooper284@aol.com

**School & Adult  
Tours Contact:**  
Darlene Hansen  
(760) 480-6320

**BATTLELINES  
Contributions  
Deadline :**  
**Feb 24 2012**  
Contact editor,  
Ellen Sweet,  
ELSweet@gmail.com

## History Discussions

by Ron Hinrichs

### November Discussion: *Lee's Ferry*

Lee's Ferry was the subject of discussion in November and will be continued in the January 17 meeting. This important segment in travel in the West is in a wild and spectacular colorful setting in the Colorado Plateau. From 150 to 200 million years ago sedimentation and uplifts created a mile high plateau of layers of multi-colored rock. Some 20 million years ago was the start of what became the Colorado River, gouging and eroding the rock to create the Grand Canyon and other declivities.

Access to the river was difficult, but recent discoveries indicate that human activity in the Lee's Ferry area, such as hunting and gathering, occurred as far back as 8000 years ago. The Indian group known as the Anasazi settled there about the time of the start of the Christian era and established communal areas until around 1200 or 1300 years A.D. At this time they departed from the river area for some unknown reasons.

The first recorded visitation of this river area was by two Franciscan priests Dominguez and Escalante. They were unable to cross the river at this point and went upriver to ford it at a

place later called the Crossing of the Fathers.

The Mormon immigration into Utah led to settlements in southern Utah in the 1850s and Jacob Hamblin was sent to the area near the junction of the Paria and Colorado rivers. His mission was to contact the Navajo Indians for conversion to the Christian faith. He crossed the Colorado at this point, but his mission failed as the Navajos were very warlike and had their own set of beliefs.

Brigham Young took a tour through this area in the late 1860s along with Major John Wesley Powell, Hamblin, and John D. Lee. Lee was instructed to stay in this area and establish a ferry across the river. He had been on the move because of the aftermath of the Mountain Meadow Massacre in which he had been involved. He located his ranch, Lonely Dell Ranch, built some structures, and started the ferry service in 1872. As he travelled a lot, his wife Emma was the principal operator of the ferry.

This discussion topic will be continued on January 17, 2012. The February 21 discussion will be *Civil Disorders in the U.S.*, led by Ron Hinrichs.

### *Thanks to our Dragoon Level Members (\$100 or more this year):*

- Agnew, Anstes
- Bowman, Bob & Judy
- Cowgill, Jane Stokes
- Foucar, Allen & Barbara
- Hill, Greg
- Key, Robert S.
- Pique, Michael
- Sweet, Melvin & Ellen
- Vilicich, Thomas M.





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OUR CORPORATE  
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**Welcoming another Battle Day**



**JROTC from  
Kearny High  
participated in  
the opening  
ceremonies**



**SPBVA table  
with Ellen  
Sweet and  
Joe Lopez  
greeted the  
public**

**Appropriately, the San  
Pasqual Band of Indians  
opened the amphithea-  
ter activities with their  
cultural presentation.**



Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf  
& Melvin Sweet





**Battle Day activities included candle dipping, Salute to the Fallen, basket making, corn husk dolls, period games of chance, and children's games. Park aides from Old Town and SPBVA members manned the stations.**



Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf & Melvin Sweet





**Californio display, fiber arts, blacksmithing, cooking, and mountain men activities entertained and educated visitors.**



Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf & Melvin Sweet





**Ben Cueva gave instructions in Spanish to the Californio participants before the action began.**  
Photo courtesy of Jake Enriquez



**Battle Day participants took part in two reenactments**



Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf & Melvin Sweet





**Another generation:**  
 At left, Richard Meyer and Nick Giancola demonstrate bullet molding to Nick's father, Michael. The Giancolas have attended Battle Day for years, visiting from the Los Angeles area. As a young boy Nick was mesmerized watching SPBVA member Nick Buskirk mold bullets. Now it is his turn!

**The end of another Battle Day. Let's hope it is not our last!**

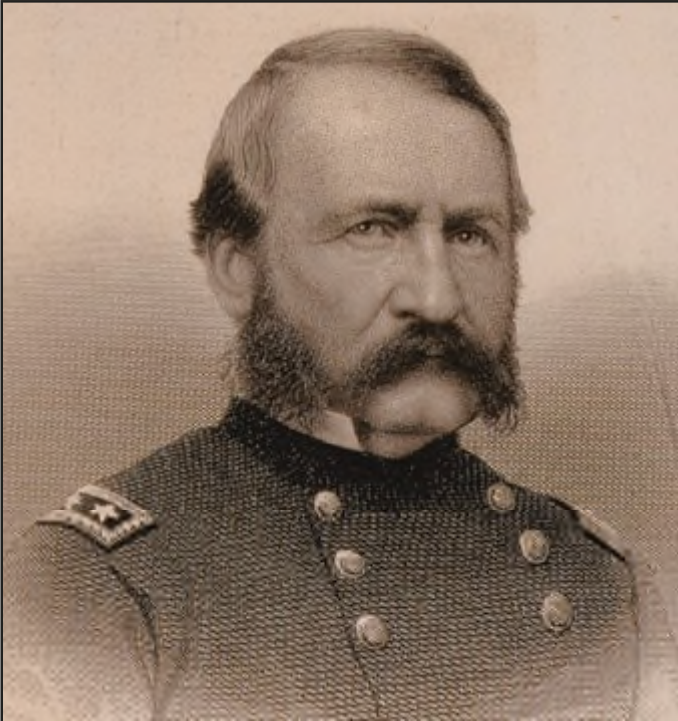


Photos courtesy of Michelle Wolf & Melvin Sweet



## Emory & the Topographical Engineers at San Pasqual

By Greg Hill



William H. Emory during the Civil War

What were surveyors, a famous artist, and a computer doing in the battle of San Pasqual? Led by Lt. William H. Emory, they were with the Corps of Topographical Engineers, the often overlooked vanguard of westward expansion. Between 1838 and 1863, the “topogs” as they were often known, were in the forefront of exploration across North America. The topogs were with the Army of the West during the march to California and the subsequent Battle of San Pasqual, returned to survey the new border with Mexico, mapped routes for the proposed transcontinental railroad, and made some of the first scientific observations in the American West.

The Corps of Topographical Engineers was created in 1838 as an elite branch of army officers with the skills to survey, map, and describe the vast territories that had been acquired in the Louisiana Purchase and later following the war with Mexico. The topogs never exceeded 36 officers at one time, but included such notables as Stephen Long and John C. Fremont. The topogs not only made maps, but also collected and recorded examples of the natural and cultural world they encountered. The topogs recruited and hired the country’s most prominent artists, cartographers, botanists, and geologists to ac-

company the expeditions to the frontier and helped lay the foundation of our new National Museum, the Smithsonian.

The story of the topographical engineers at the battle of San Pasqual began with the outbreak of the U.S.-Mexican War. The Army of the West began its march to conquer New Mexico and California in April 1846. As part of the military expedition, Colonel John James Abert, head of the topographical engineers, ordered four of his outstanding young officers, led by Lt. William H. Emory, to accompany the Army on its march to the Pacific. This small detachment of topogs, along with a civilian staff, was to map the route and describe the new lands that would soon be part of the United States.

William Hemsley Emory was raised on a wealthy Maryland plantation, attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, married into the family of Benjamin Franklin, and was best friends with his classmate Jefferson Davis. After West Point, service with the 4th Artillery and two years as a civil engineer, Emory was accepted into the Corps of Topographical Engineers. In 1846 Emory was an accomplished soldier, surveyor, geologist, and botanist, making him an ideal leader for the expedition with the Army of the West. Under Emory’s command were three other topographical officers, Lieutenants William H. Warner, William G. Peck, and James W. Abert; and Norman Bestor, described by Emory as the “computer”; the famous landscape artist John Mix Stanley; and eight assistants and packers. The “computer,” Mr. Bestor, was a statistician needed to convert Emory’s 2,000 astronomical observations into usable longitude and latitude for the maps. John Mix Stanley’s drawings and paintings from the expedition were some of the first seen of the Southwest by the American public.

Throughout the expedition Emory and his men carried out their scientific duties, but always kept the military mission at the forefront. During the battle of San Pasqual, all of the topographical party was involved in the fighting, including the civilians, of which one, Francois Menard, was killed. Emory distinguished himself at several critical points during the battle, and went on with General S.W. Kearny to

(Continued on page 10)



## Emory & the Topogs continued

(Continued from page 9)

finish the fighting with the Californios in Los Angeles.

Although trained as a scientist, Emory knew that the military purpose of the mission was preeminent. Nevertheless, Emory collected an impressive array of natural history specimens and made one of the first maps of the Southwest based on sound astronomical observations. Due to his friendship with the prominent botanist John Torrey, Emory was given credit for the discovery of 18 new species and one new genus during the expedition. A new species of oak tree, *Quercus emoryi*, was named by Torrey to honor Emory. Emory's report for Congress, "Notes on a Military Reconnaissance" was later reprinted for the public and became a popular account of the Southwest. His maps make all previous commercial maps obsolete and "Notes" was used as a guide by travelers during the Gold Rush.

Most of Emory's topographical party are lost to history. Lt. William Warner later led his own surveys for the transcontinental railroads, but was killed by Indians in Northern California. John Mix Stanley won acclaim for his paintings, but lost most of his works in a fire. After the war, Emory directed the survey for the new boundary between the U.S. and Mexico and published another massive report on the natural features of the borderlands. Emory finished his military career with continued service to

the United States as a Union general during the Civil War, defending Washington, D.C., and leading troops in the Indian Territory, Virginia, and Louisiana.

The epic explorations of the West by the topographical engineers ended during the Civil War when the larger Army Corps of Engineers absorbed the topogs. After the war, government exploration was turned over to new civilian agencies such as the U.S. Geological Survey. But the legacy of the Corps of Topographical Engineers endures through their pioneering accomplishments in cartography, geology, ethnology, and natural history. When we visit San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park and remember the participants in the battle, we should also reflect on the hardships and perseverance of the topogs and their contributions to our understanding of the natural world around us.

For further information:

Emory, W.H., *Notes of a Military Reconnaissance from Fort Leavenworth, in Missouri to San Diego in California*, . . . , 30th Congress, 1st Session, Senate Exec. Doc7, 1848.

Goetzmann, William H., *Army Exploration in the American West, 1803-1863*, Yale Univ Press, 1959.

Norris, Milligan, and Faulk: *William H. Emory, Soldier-Scientist*, Univ of AZ Press, 1998.



Author Greg Hill with his Corps of Topographical Engineers display at the 2010 Battle Day. JROTC from Kearny High are shown looking at the exhibit.

Photo courtesy of Melvin Sweet



JOIN NOW! Our non-profit organization supports the activities of the San Pasqual Battlefield State Historic Park. All members receive a subscription to *BATTLELINES*, a 10% discount on all bookstore items, special programs, field trips, history discussions, and opportunities to participate in our Living History Sundays and in our annual December re-enactment of the Battle.

**SAN PASQUAL BATTLEFIELD VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

P.O. Box 300816, Escondido, CA 92030-0816  
(760) 737-2201

This is my/our membership application & dues for the following category:

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**SPBVA’S HISTORY DISCUSSIONS:  
Join us on Third Tuesdays!**

**Tuesday, Jan 17 3:30—5:30 pm**  
*Lee’s Ferry continuation*  
 led by Jim Newcom

**Tuesday, Feb 21 3:30—5:30 pm**  
*Civil Disorder in the U.S.*  
 led by Ron Hinrichs



**Please call Ron Hinrichs 760 746-8380 for information.  
 Escondido Public Library, 239 S. Kalmia, 2nd floor conference room.**



# BATTLELINES

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BATTLELINES

JAN/FEB 2012

## OFF THE SHELF...

by Shirley Buskirk

Did you ever wonder why there are beans in Boston, sauerbraten in Pennsylvania, beignets in New Orleans, and enchiladas in the Southwest? Well, different parts of our country were settled by people from different parts of the world and they brought their food preferences with them. The English claimed New England, the Germans settled in Pennsylvania, France had Louisiana and much of the Mississippi River Valley, and the Spanish and Mexicans had California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Texas, and parts of Colorado and Wyoming, plus Florida. It is great to have such a variety of foods to select from.

Town and street names also reflect the early settlers. The Spanish names are familiar to me as a third generation Californian, but when I travel East I stumble over Indian names such as Lauada and Mattawamkeag.

Last time I recommended some books that told

about California under Mexico. This time I'd like to tell about two books when California still belonged to Spain. *Dos Californios* is a children's book. It is the story of the pirate Hippolyte de Bouchard's 1818 raid on the California coast and how a young Californio and his old sea otter thwart the evildoers. Bouchard was a real pirate and the story is written in English and Spanish.

Another children's book about Spanish California is volume one in *The Story of California* series. There are 45 stories in this book, none longer than a page or two, with pictures suitable for coloring. This is about the men and women who made California's history. There are the explorers Cortez, Cabrillo, Drake and Vizcaino. Padre Serra and Portola take possession of the province in 1770 and the missions are established. It is an easy way to learn about California's heritage and adults will find it entertaining and informative as well.