

# Sons of Confederate Veterans

## CALIFORNIA DIVISION REUNIONS

Vern Padgett, Camp 1208, Los Angeles

Revised 1 June 2018

<http://californiascv.org/Division%20Reunion%20History.pdf>

### **2018 Bakersfield, Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 9-11 March, hosted by Bakersfield Camp 2048; our 24<sup>th</sup> Reunion.**

The Friday night reception offered camaraderie for all, thanks to host Camp 1770's Robert and Ryan Williams. At our Business Meeting on Saturday morning, 10 of our 12 camps were in attendance (missing Long Beach and Internet Camp 2023 Modesto). Special Guests: Thomas Strain, CiC; ATM Commander Johnnie Holley, Chief of Staff Charles Lauret; ATM Aide-de-Camp George Gremillion, and OCR CA President Sandy Padgett. Camp 302 San Diego reported the loss of the Jefferson Davis plaque from Horton Plaza, the renaming of Robert E. Lee Elementary School, and the City of San Diego disallowing of the joint annual Memorial Day Ceremony with the SUVCW at Mt. Hope Cemetery. Camp 1440 of San Jose noted its work with grave identification along with Camp 1627 of Sacramento. Robert Williams of Camp 1770, Orange County stated that the Orange County Register claimed that the county had "the last Confederate monument." He also told of the pressure to remove "CSA" and Confederate names from the Santa Ana Cemetery monument. Webmaster Climo talked of taking down the division website during the Confederate hysteria—it is now up. He told of using a different server and said that PayPal can now be used for division purchases. Kevin Street, during his Heritage Report, stated that Facebook had shut down the division page but other Confederate sites were still up. ATM Commander Johnnie Holley discussed his fair interview with a Boston talk show host and how he emphasized the need to humanize one's opponent. Division Commander Smith said, "Put them on the defensive" and CiC Strain went on to say that we all must be very careful who we talk to and what we say. Division Judge Advocate Robert Crook made the statement that the best thing to say is "No comment." Adjutant/Treasurer Padgett advised that the California Division has 283 members in 12 camps; 67 people attended the 2018 Reunion: 23 guests, of which 4 were from National, 37 members; and 7 cadets. Division, after web services, travel expenses, and donations, with dues payments of \$1415, now has a balance of \$2445. Division Commander Smith announced that the replaced Division Charter is in place, dated June 1994. We plan to hold a joint SCV/SUV meeting every 3 years. David Pyle was elected Upper South Brigade Commander with Robert Williams garnering the same honor as Commander of the Bailey Lower South Brigade. Mike Climo reported that his Inland Empire Camp 1742 is sponsoring a youth to attend the Sam Davis Youth Camp in Texas. Saturday Afternoon: 200 California Division Challenge coins sold, distributed, or kept by Quartermaster. Treasurer paid \$776 to Jim Milsap for the coins. At the Saturday night Banquet, National and Division officers signed the replacement California Division Charter. UDC's Scarlett Stahl provided greetings from her organization and Commander-in-Chief Thomas Strain entertained the gathering with an outstanding presentation on the happenings at the national level. The sword for Camp-of-the-Year was presented by Commander Robert Williams of Orange County Camp 1770 to Commander Jim Stephens of Camp 302 San Diego. Camp 302 sponsored the Silent Auction again, and we raised \$1000 for Division. After the banquet, more conviviality and exchange of information took place back at the Hospitality Room. Sunday morning, the UDC led us in honoring our ancestors at a memorial service at Union Cemetery, with a Color Guard led by Greg Frazier (thanks to Jim Stephens for his record).

### **2017 Bakersfield, Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 11-13 March, hosted by Bakersfield Camp 2048; our 23<sup>rd</sup> Reunion.**

Our Friday night reception offered camaraderie for all. At our Business Meeting on Saturday morning, 11 of our 12 camps were in attendance. Jon Fowler has taken lead with the Hunley Award Program in California. Kevin Street described the Mechanized Cavalry Artillery Auxiliary as a group for those who want to flag from cars or trucks. Kevin described the benefits of flagging in the L.A. area. He reported flagging State Representative Huffman, and that a photo made the *New York Times*. Kevin has added a Division Facebook page including a secret group for SCV members. Webmaster Mike Climo keeps our division web site free of hacking and reports that we have unlimited space for posting our news. Tim Desmond won his court case on showing his painting at a local fair. Commander Smith reported that our division added 69 new members this year. Twelve in our division attended the National Reunion in Arlington, Texas where our members received 36 national level awards. We agreed to plan a joint meeting with our SUV brothers every 3 years. Adjutant Vern reported that our Division has 282 full members. Our

largest camp is Sacramento 1627. Our camps range from Father A. J. Ryan Camp 302 of San Diego, in the South, to George Blake Cosby Camp 1627 in Sacramento in the north. Our Treasurer reported a balance of \$2980. We had registrations of 39 for Lunch and 53 for the Banquet. Steve Smith was reelected Commander; Scott Price was reelected Lieutenant Commander; Jon Fowler was reelected Brigade Commander Upper South and Robert Williams was elected Brigade Commander Lower South. Vern Padgett was reappointed Adjutant and Treasurer. Donations to the Silent Auction from Order of Confederate Rose and Camp 302 gathered \$430 for SCV. At the Banquet Saturday night, Commander Jim Stephens of Camp 302 San Diego presented the sword honoring the Camp of the Year to Commander Scott Price of Orange County Camp 1770. Scott assembled seven men from his camp for a group photo and stated that the honor was due to them for their hard work. Each year the Member of the Year award is presented; this year, Commander Smith gave that honor to the women of SCV, awarding 19 certificates to the women supporting our work. Among the banquet guests were UDC California Division President Scarlett Stahl. After the banquet, more conviviality and exchange of information took place back at the Hospitality Room. Sunday morning, the UDC led us in honoring our ancestors at a memorial service at Union Cemetery, with a Color Guard led by Greg Frazier, and an SCV drone capturing images for Facebook.

**2016 Bakersfield, Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 11-13 March.** Our 22<sup>nd</sup> Reunion, hosted by Bakersfield-Tehachapi Camp 2048. Special Guests: Kelly Barrow, CiC; ATM Commander Charles Lauret; ATM LtCmdr Paul Gramling, and ATM Aide-de-Camp George Gremillion. 11 of our 12 camps were in attendance; a record for us. Camp Reports: 302 Jim Stephens: Had Color Guards for 3 parades and Division Reunion and Balboa Museum. 1208 Los Angeles report by Robert Crook: Memorable meeting was at home of Mike Wright with Prof. Jim Stanbery's program "Sherman Surrenders to Johnston?" 1440 Gary Waltrip: Camp is now active. He acknowledged the work of James Bonds, former commander. 1627 Tad Smith Adjutant reported 53 members. SCV and SUV jointly laid a wreath along with rifle and cannon volleys at Dixon Cemetery at the memorial ceremony. Scott Price of 1770 reported 30 members and continuing Confederate memorial services at Santa Ana Cemetery. Five men received national awards. 1804 Tim Desmond reported 40 members. He said his flag painting was censored at an art show and he has 3 new attorneys in his camp. Vance Marsh of 2007 Long Beach reported that his camp is dormant now. 2023 Modesto report by Rob Sealy- he stressed cooperation with UDC Chapter 1343 Sterling Price placing Southern Crosses of Honor. 2048 Bakersfield-Tehachapi report from Jon Fowler and Steve Browning. Cheers from the crowd at the Bakersfield Parade. Worked with Toys for Tots. Kevin Street showed a 10 by 15 foot Battle Flag on the Capitol steps. The Mechanized Cavalry rode 4000 miles back from Richmond last July. Webmaster Mike Climo needs info from camps. Our website is now accessible on any mobile device. Facebook Page Administrator Kevin Street reported that we now have our own page. Barron Smith reported running a Facebook group. One page was hacked and Kevin Smith had to work with hostile Facebook San Francisco administrators. We are the only group that can sue Facebook. Adjutant's Report: Vern reported we have 12 camps and 286 members, up 21 from last year. Our largest camp is Sacramento with 46 men. Next largest is Los Angeles with 45. There is a Division Reunion History on our Web Site, of all state reunions back to 1994, when our Division was created, and a Training Manual for officers. Recruiting: HQ sends our state adjutant the contact info of every man from California who downloads an application, and he sends out, a welcome letter with full contact information on their local camp leaders and other information, copy to their camp. Vern handed out the *Answer Back!* One-page sheets as a recruiting tool. Treasurer's Report: Balance is \$2763. Northern Brigade Commander's report by Jon Fowler, and Southern Brigade Commander's report by Dave Sanders. Attacking Southern Heritage lays the groundwork for attacking American heritage. Dave recommended the film *Band of Angels* (1957). Division Commander Steve Smith: TV interviews included the San Diego R.E. Lee School renaming. Points for debating: Who had the most slave states in April 1861? (U.S. had 8.) Who fired the first shot—At Pearl Harbor? (U.S. sank a Japanese midget sub early morning, 7 Dec 1941.) Old Business: Voted to keep old Division flag. CiC Barrow told us that the stain "looks like Yankee blood." MSP to create a Chaplain Corps. Saturday afternoon, a round table discussion on how to keep new members and how to keep them active, with input from our national leaders. Saturday evening we held our banquet. CiC Kelly Barrow spoke. Camp 302 awarded him a \$5000 check for Heritage Defense. Camp of the Year Award went to San Diego Camp 302. Sunday morning, UDC Chapter 2634 Bakersfield Mary Boykin Chesnut led our Memorial Service at Bakersfield Union Cemetery, with Robert Byrne on bagpipes, and Jon Fowler commanding the Honor Guard.

**2015 Bakersfield, DoubleTree by Hilton, 13-15 March.** Hosted by Camp 2048 Bakersfield. Our 21<sup>st</sup> Reunion. We have 12 camps with 262 members. 10 camps were present, all but 1440 and 2062). Our largest is Sacramento 1627,

with 42 members. Second-largest is Los Angeles with 39. Our Treasury has \$2453. Jim Stephens of 302 discussed their Turkey Shoot and memorial services with the SUV at Mt. Hope Cemetery. Camp 1208 reported memorial services at Founder's Park in uptown Whittier. Sacramento Camp 1627 presented 2 Hunley Awards and collaborated with UDC at Fair Oaks Cemetery. Barron Smith of 1631 Santa Barbara is active with the San Luis Obispo Historical Society. Steve Madden of 1742 Inland Empire leads memorial services at Redlands Cemetery and defends the South at the Lincoln Shrine. Camp 1770 Orange County has a new commander, Scott Price, a transfer from Georgia; he compared his camp's activities favorably to those in his old camp. Farrell Cooley publishes our division newsletter and leads memorial services at Santa Ana Cemetery. He presented \$3400 to our National Heritage Fund at the National Reunion in Charleston SC; \$1100 was from his camp and the rest from our Division. Chuck Norred resumed command of Camp 1804 Fresno, gave Hunley Awards and hosted a Rifle Shoot. Camp 2007 Long Beach, led by Vance Marsh, continues heritage activities. Camp 2023 Modesto became an internet-only camp for the 8 counties they cover. Camp 1770 Orange County received Camp of the Year, and Steve Smith was elected Division Commander. Mike Climo maintains web sites for the camps, for the division, and for Texas and Florida Divisions, and sends articles to the digital Riverside city newspaper. We created brigades: One for Northern and one for Southern California. Jon Fowler and David Sanders are the new commanders. Steve Smith proposed that we meet for our Reunions in Bakersfield. At the Commander's Supper, Richard Kline performed to our wonder, we raised cash at the Silent Auction, Farrell Cooley discussed Hispanics in the Confederacy, and Father Bower discussed religion in the South, to a standing ovation.

**2014 Fresno, Piccadilly Inn**, 21-23 March. Hosted by Camp 1804, Fresno. Our 20<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Chuck Norred hosted us Friday evening in his room with fried chicken. Business Meeting: Invocation by Ernie Powell. Ten of our 12 camps present. **Adjutant:** We have 12 camps with 240 members, down 12 from 252 members in 2013. Our largest camp is John Bell Hood of Los Angeles with 40; smallest is Santa Barbara 1631 with 4 members. We have \$3058 in our treasury. Our members have donated to the Elm Springs Museum Fund with generosity: \$1792, most of it from Camp 1770. **Camp reports: 1208 Los Angeles:** John Roberts showed the recruiting posters he had made, featuring all ethnic groups in Confederate service. They worked with SUV Cmdr Nick Smith at Grand View Cemetery in Glendale identifying the burial place of Colonel Charles F. Lenone, born in Spain, a Hispanic Confederate, commander of Libby Prison in Richmond, and several other Confederate soldiers. At the Banquet, guest speakers were John Smoley and Steve Smith. UDC guests included division president Martha Slater, and Margaret Alley, who received the SCV Heritage Defense Award. Tim Desmond read his poetry. On Sunday morning, Lou Olker led a memorial service at Mt. View Cemetery. Honor Guard included men from Camp 302 San Diego. **1627 Sacramento:** Lou Olker discussed activities with 2 UDC Chapters, placement of headstones, and whether Sacramento is now the largest camp. **1631 Santa Barbara:** Barron Smith discussed the SCV Facebook page. **1742 Inland Empire:** John Smoley discussed hosting last year's Reunion, and Barron Smith finding a new Confederate grave, the 12th, during the camp Memorial Service at Hillside Cemetery. There are GPS coordinates on each grave. Mike Climo sends articles each month to the digital Riverside City newspaper, [www.examiner.com/riverside-examiners](http://www.examiner.com/riverside-examiners) Mike Climo's Hunley presentation is a big draw at reenactments. **1770 Orange County:** Steven Knowles reported on the CSA Memorial Day service at the 14-ton monument at Santa Ana Cemetery with the 1st NC Cavalry. VFW and American Legion cooperate in a joint US Memorial Day service. Last June, Gordon Bricken, past camp commander and past mayor of Santa Ana, was buried next to the monument. Bricken identified 100 CSA veterans buried in Orange County. Gave 2 Hunley JROTC Awards; recruited at Labor Day Huntington Beach Reenactment. Food Drive collected \$430 for the Tustin Rescue Mission; Toy Drive \$338 for Orangewood Children's Home of Orange. Camp has grown to 29 men. Cmdr Cooley publishes the division newsletter. **1804 Fresno:** Chuck Norred's camp has placed monuments at Mt. View Cemetery. **2007 Long Beach:** Vance Marsh discussed memorial service planning for Sunnyside Cemetery in Long Beach. **2023 Modesto:** Lt Cmdr Dan Shepherd reported that their camp commander went to Texas. He discussed grave markings and offered greetings from charter member Charles Phillips. They donated \$1000 to SLRC.

**2013 Redlands, Ayers Hotel**, 12-14 April. Our 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion. Hosted by John Smoley and Camp 1742 Inland Empire. Friday evening, Meet and Greet BBQ in Ayres courtyard. Saturday morning, we toured the Smiley Library, led by Docent Steve Madden, followed by a catered lunch in the library. During the tour, I found myself in Curator Don McCue's office, and nearly had a seizure when I saw 3 cigars on his desk, wrapped in a telegram with battle orders. Saturday afternoon, our Business meeting: Eight of our 12 camps were present (absent: 2023; 2048; 1440; 2062). **Adjutant:** California Division has 12 Camps, with 252 members, an increase of 5 from last year. Our treasury

has \$1766. **Camp reports: 1208** John Roberts elected new commander, supported Camp 1804 Monument placement program with \$600 in donations. **1742** John Smoley: GPS locations of CSA Veterans at Hillside Cemetery established. Mike Climo's Hunley display continues to draw crowds at reenactments. Two camp members attended our National Reunion in Murfreesboro. Phil Smoley, of Lake County, hosts a roundtable each month. Mike Climo writes a column monthly for a Riverside newspaper. **1770** Farrell Cooley: Maintaining camp with 23 members. Had 7 regular meetings at member's homes or at a restaurant. Sponsoring JRROTC Hunley Awards. Donated to 4 service organizations. Donated \$125 to Orangewood Children's Home and 190 pounds of canned food to Orange County Rescue Mission of Tustin. Hosted Confederate Memorial Day and National Memorial Day at Santa Ana Cemetery. **1804** Chuck Norred: 12 regular meetings and 11 special meetings this past year. Mountain View Cemetery. Richard Kline involved in drive to repair mausoleum, and place Confederate monuments. Honor guards, recruiting booths at reenactments. Eight or 10 articles in newspapers and magazines, from Tim Desmond. **2007** Vance Marsh. Life member in NC; in Louisiana, it is a *dishonor* not to belong to SCV. **Heritage Officer** Mike Schooling: Candace Harwick case with SLRC and many T-shirts. Memphis city parks renamed. Discussion at showing our flags at schools. Dupont and 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court. Harvard University voted down a plaque honoring 78 Confederate servicemen killed in the War, all Harvard graduates. There were 5 division commanders present: Jeff Towery, Barron Smith, Chuck Norred, Steve Smith, and Farrell Cooley. **Benediction:** Chaplain Ernie Powell; Richard Kline ended our meeting with *Dixie* performed on trumpet. Banquet at Redlands Heritage Hall with speaker Phil Smoley, on "Contrast of Character." I present an award to Jeff Towery, founder of the California SCV Division. Sunday morning, Steve Madden led a Memorial Day service, and then we marked the 11 CSA graves at Hillside Memorial Park Cemetery in Redlands, and Barron Smith discovered another one, next to where we held the memorial service.

**2012 Santa Maria, Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites; 24 March.** Our 18<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Hosted by Don Clotworthy and Camp 1631. Eight of our 12 camps in attendance (absent: 1440; 1627; 2023; 2062). Invocation led by Chaplain Ernie Powell. Our Division Treasury is \$2196. We have 247 members in 12 camps, up 23 from last year. Farrell Cooley reported that we presented \$3000 to CiC Michael Givens, at the National Meeting in Montgomery. Graves registration, using the Texas software, is now underway. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Cmdr report from Tim Desmond: Assisted in placing Stone at Bethel Cemetery on 28<sup>th</sup> April. Resistance to monument discussed by Mike Schooling and Greg Farley. **Adjutant Padgett** reported: HQ distributed thousands of postcards addressed to SCV HQ in mass mailings to sportsmen and gun enthusiasts. The postcard read "Interesting in preserving Confederate cultural heritage? Return this card today for more information or call 1800 MY SOUTH or visit us online at 1800MySouth.com." Ben Sewell sent me scans of those from California addresses. I sent the contact info for each man to the camp nearest them. I also USPS mailed info to each man, 107 in total. Adjutant also reported creating and submitting a 2 inch column ad to *California Rifle and Pistol Association Newsletter*, which was rejected without explanation. He reported on the training manual for our division, created using sections of the Camp Handbook (available from HQ) and our division constitution. **Webmaster Report: Climo:** Mike designed the Texas Division website. **Camp reports: 302** Roy Adair: Planned activities in 10 of the years months. 302 works with Union groups and works with David Lugo, a great supporter of SCV, organizing the memorial service at Mt. Hope Memorial Cemetery. In observance of the Sesquicentennial, 302 had a 3-week display at Main Library last year. This year 302 will install a stone bench. **1742** Steve Madden: Mike Climo continues the H.L. Hunley presentations at reenactments, which always draws interest, and works for recruiting. John Smoley reenacts as Jefferson Davis at schools and roundtables. Annual Confederate Memorial Day includes GPS marking of each grave with coordinates. Placed plaque at a Cemetery. Steve volunteers at Lincoln Museum in Redlands, and puts in as much Southern Truth as is possible. **1770** Farrell Cooley: Asks members to present at meetings, a successful strategy. Camp hosted Confederate Memorial Day at Fairhaven Cemetery and National Memorial Day at Santa Ana Cemetery. Orange County has 90 Confederate veterans. Attended National Reunion in Montgomery, Alabama. Christmas Party for Orangewood Children's Home. Donations of clothing and food drive for homeless: Orange County Rescue Mission, with 37 lbs of food. We had lunch at T. J. Plaughter's house and "Show and Tell" with antiques and WbtS weapons. In the afternoon, a tour of the Santa Maria Air Museum, then Memorial Service at Santa Maria Cemetery. Banquet at the Los Alamos Union Hotel, with Steve Madden as our speaker.

**2011 Marine Corps Air Station Officer's Club, San Diego, 11-13 March.** Our 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion. Hosted by Camp 302 San Diego. Friday evening reception, Camp 1208 member Fred Olen Ray serves a clear refreshment. Business

meeting: 9 camps present (absent: 2023; 2062; 2048). Roy Adair presents SCV Ladies Appreciation Medal to Robyn Adair. Division treasury has \$3540, and we have 224 members and 12 camps in our Division. Heritage Chief Mike Schooling reviewed the Bakersfield Welcome sign incident of last year (our SCV sign was removed, but so were all the others!). Mike Presswood told of our flag disappearing from the podium after we posted it there at L.A. National Cemetery last Memorial Day (we found it behind the stands). Camp 302 reported that Steve Smith and Deanne Smith won top scores in the Turkey Shoot (did they score each other's targets?). Roy Adair presented the Rebel of the Year Award to Ernie Powell. Camp 1440: James Bonds reported no camp activities. Camp 1627: Lou Olker found a Real Son, and signed him up with SCV, shortly before he died. 1631: Barron Smith reported that 2 members died. 1742: John Smoley reported that Mike Climo has been active presenting on the H.L. Hunley at reenactments, and that Steve Madden is experiencing legal problems. 1770: Farrell Cooley reported that their camp hosted memorial events at Santa Ana Cemetery, and that Gordon Bricken's book represents 10 years of research. New Business: David Ham identified himself as the inventor of Truck Nuts, and advised us to advertise in the *National Parts Peddler*. We donate \$200 to the Southern Legal Resource Center. Farrell Cooley is elected Division Commander, and John Smoley Lt Cmdr. Curt Tipton reviewed Sesquicentennial events and the JROTC Program. Lunch at MiraMar Inn. After, a ceremony at Mt. Soledad--the famous peak with the war memorial cross in San Diego. Banquet speaker was retired Chief Petty Officer Stuart Hedley, who was on board the USS West Virginia during the attack at Pearl Harbor. After his inspiring presentation, Ernie Powell recited "The Conquered Banner." Sunday morning, we toured the MCAS Miramar Aviation Museum, conducted by museum curator Steve Smith. The other option was a tour of the USS Midway, led by Roy Adair and Jim Stephens (I had just been there, so I went to the Museum).

**2010 Lebec (Fort Tejon), BestRest Inn, 24 April. 16th Reunion.** Organized by Mike Presswood and Vern Padgett of Camp 1208. We had 9 of 12 camps attending. Absent: 2023 Modesto, 1440 San Jose, and 1627 Sacramento. We had a big balance from our last year's reunion, and I dropped the registration all the way down to \$25 per person for this one. We still cleared a profit. It can be done men! Friday evening reception, Vern served beer that he made himself. Business Meeting, 9:15 am. Our division has \$3528 and 236 men. Camp 302 report from Roy Adair: Rebel of the Year to Zach Forsythe, active duty Marine, and actor in several scenes in *Gods and Generals*. Camp 2048 report from Dave Longbottom: The "Welcome to Tehachapi sign has lost all its organizational logos, including the SCV one." Ken Ramsey resigns command; Steve Smith is now division commander. Mike Climo is now our Webmaster. Ben Sewell's letter thanking us for our \$190 contribution to the Elm Springs Museum Fund. Chuck Norred spoke on the topic of our having a division newsletter, and Roger Anderson of Camp 2062 volunteered to do so. Dinner: Authentic 1860's food at Ft. Tejon, cooked over an open fire, courtesy of Les Gilbert, Fort Tejon Dragoon Program Cook-- followed by tour of Fort Tejon. Banquet: Instead of eating my supper, I poured the Lancaster wine from the previous year at each table. I had carried home all the left-over wine from the 2009 Reunion, and I did not want to have to deal with another year of storing surplus Lancaster area wine another year until the next reunion. I think we got rid of it by the end of the banquet. Also there was this weird thing where the musical group brought more people than we had contracted for, and I think they expected to be paid more because more of them showed up. If that was not enough to alter my appetite, they also had no singing-- because I had sent printed songs to their manager months earlier, they had the idea that I would be doing all the singing. So they sat there, more of them than we expected, and played instrumentals, waiting for me to come up and do vocals. I don't remember if I ever did eat my food. After the banquet, we had period music and dancing, and no singing.

**2009 Lebec (Fort Tejon), BestRest Inn, 8-10 May.** Organized by Mike Presswood of Camp 1208. Our 15th Annual Reunion. Friday night, supper on your own, at the Cookery. Breakfast again at the Cookery. 7 of 12 camps present. Camp with most members present, 302, with 6 men. Treasury: \$2520. Membership of division estimated at 240. Letter from Ben Sewell, thanking us for our \$750 donation to the national organization, and his acknowledgment of additional contributions from Camps 302, 1208, and 2007. Padgett reads letter from Chernik of L.A. National Cemetery, disallowing display of our flag, as there are no Confederates interred there. I wrote back, with documentation of Cpl. Linza King, 34th Arkansas Cavalry, buried there, who authorizes the display of our flag. We approve payment of SCV dues for military on combat duty overseas. We vote unanimously to waive voting rights for Camp 1631, which did not pay dues. Election of officers: Johnny Holland moved to nominate Ken Ramsey, and close nominations, and everyone (almost) yelled "YAY!" and Kenny was re-elected. Steve Smith elected Lt. Cmdr. Ken Ramsey told of the flag he flies from his home, and the local newspaper article about it. Ken told us of a 3 month

CHP investigation of him, because a CHP car (his) was parked under a Confederate flag (his). Conclusion: Conclusion: No wrongdoing; you may park your CHP car under a Confederate flag. Ken told us about flying a Confederate flag on his camper, traveling from NC to California after our National Reunion, and receiving hundreds of thumbs up and only one negative communication. Steve Smith told us of his experiences with the public in connection with his flying the flag. Open fire pit cooked lunch by Lester Gilbert, Ft. Tejon Dragoon Cook. Tour of Fort Tejon, a real WtbS military post. Period music and dancing at banquet, led by Ginger Alberti of Brodiaea's Fashions & Period Designs. I remember that Mike bought 2 cases of local area---Lancaster— wine, for a lot of money, and more than half of it was left over. I hauled it home in my car, and stored it in my bedroom for the year. Every couple months I would turn the case over, so that the red gunk would not settle at one end of the bottle. It did anyway. The date of this Reunion was a problem for some men-- it was Mother's Day-- probably not a good day to schedule a Reunion.

**2008 Sacramento, Double Tree Hotel, 7-9 March. 14<sup>th</sup> Reunion.** Hosted by Lou Olker and Camp 1627. Ten of 12 camps in attendance. We have \$1407 in our treasury. Membership is down again, to 250. Adjutant distributes a roster showing top officers in each camp. Use our division website, hosted by Gary Waltrip. Division will sponsor Cmdr Ramsey's daughter as a debutante at the National Reunion. Camp of the Year point system explained again by Steve Smith. Memorial service at General Cosby's gravesite. 46<sup>th</sup> Virginia Band at banquet. Scheduled Guest speaker was Tom Cartwright, "The Battle of Franklin." Lou Olker remembers: "I paid for a suite so we could have room to gather; Also the centerpieces were done by the daughter of a good friend. The tab on that almost floored me. Loye and I ran over to Costco and bought hors d'oeuvres including smoked salmon which I think Ira Lack thought was his dinner ... he ate a third of it. Next morning at our business meeting Fred Bohmfalk hit me with the news that Cartwright was snowed in in Tennessee, and that Chicago airports were down because of weather. Ed Sims, D.D.S. from Sacramento saved our bacon by putting on a minstrel's outfit; explained the evolution of banjos and the history of minstrel music, and then he and a friend on guitar played music from the 1840's through the Eighties. After dinner we had our "drawing"(we had a ton of books and things ... only four silent auction items) where everyone was given a ticket at the door at no charge (we were admonished that selling raffle tickets would constitute illegal gambling; I know, police and firefighters do it all the time) so we just gave them away instead trying to set up a silent auction for every book. I remember Brad Schall, of Sons of Union Veterans, and his wife arriving about 5 pm and asked where he could get a scotch and I said "Do I have a room for you!" (the Suite). When he entered the room half the guys knew him (a lot of SOB's—Sons of Both Union and Confederate) and someone called out: "Yankee alert!" I know we took off to the cemetery and accidentally left a bunch of people behind. Sorry about that. Rooms were \$99 a night. In addition to the Presidential Suite (which I paid for ... was working then!) we paid for our meeting room and coffee; banquet room; podium and microphone; dinner (I can't remember if we had red and white wine or if we paid for that ... I think we paid for two bottles each for each table.)

**2007 Bakersfield, Best Western, 9-11 March. 13<sup>th</sup> Reunion.** Hosted again by Kenny Ramsey and the Bakersfield 2048 Camp. Invocation by Real Son Woody Plaugher. We have \$1603 in our treasury, and 265 men in the division, down 44 from last year. Three camps lost half their men (1742; 1770; 2007), and 2 camps lost all their annual members (1440 and 1631). JB Hood remains the largest camp with 63 (down 4). Division contributes \$750 to SCV HQ, and more from camps. Steve Smith explains the Camp of the Year points system. Memorial Service at Greenlawn Cemetery. Lou Olker recalls: "The second Bakersfield, we got lost and half of us ended up at Buck Owens' gravesite at a cemetery that had the same name as the one north of town (that we finally found in time for a ceremony). I think the second one was where, at supper, the band started playing The Battle Hymn of the Republic and Marcia stood up and said "I 'm out of here!" And people started to file out the side door! What a hoot." Camp 302 receives Camp of the Year. Kenny Ramsey elected Division Commander. Birthday celebration for Real Son Woody Plaugher.

**2006 Bakersfield, Best Western 11 March. 12<sup>th</sup> Reunion.** Hosted by Kenny Ramsey and the Bakersfield 2048 Camp. Friday night social at the Crystal Palace Restaurant, where we saw Buck Owens perform, including his version of Dixie, only 8 days before his death. After that, juleps in Div cmdr Chuck Norred's suite. Saturday morning: Breakfast buffet in the Sequoia Room, followed by business meeting. Invocation by Real Son Woody Plaugher. We have \$1700 in our treasury, and 323 men in California SCV. Hurricane Katrina report by Ramsey; Rose Parade report by Michael Robbe. Saturday afternoon: Dr. Ro King on General Higgins. Adjutant's meeting; commander's meeting, and OCR

meeting. Ro King and I present our 2-page summary of short arguments against the usual lies the Yankees tell: "Answer Back!" 4 pm, Memorial at Union Cemetery, led by Richard Kline and Tim Desmond. Sandy and I drove around for over an hour, with Donnie Kennedy in our back seat, trying to find the cemetery. We never did. Banquet Speaker: Walter Donald Kennedy (*The South Was Right*). Awards: Camp of the Year, and Rebel of the Year. Music and dance with "Geezers on the Loose."

**2005 Pasadena, Marriott Hotel**, 11-13 March. 11<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Organized by Mike Schooling, Treasurer, Camp 302. Friday night reception at McMurphy's Tavern, hosted by the Reunion. We have \$1468 in our treasury, and 279 men in the Division. L.A. Camp 1208 is the largest with 67 men. We raised division dues from \$2 to \$5, following spirited discussion, in which each side made cogent points. We are now a member of the Civil War Preservation Trust, and can save battlefield land in the name of California SCV. We have SCV and UDC working on global positioning systems—an important new way to document part of our heritage. We have skilled people from SCV, UDC, and SUV all working together, using this technology. Cmdr of Camp 2007 Long Beach, Paul Williams, displayed his son's flag. His son, a Marine, carried this Battle Flag in Iraq. Saturday picnic in park across from hotel, by the soldier's statue, hosted by Reunion. Meeting of League of the South Members-- Nunn, Padgett, Williams. I remember providing food for this picnic-- It looked like we might be short, so Kathy and Bob Ralston offered to go buy more food. I gave them cash, and they came back a while later with soda pop and potato chips. At the Banquet: 27 members and 23 guests—50 in all. Banquet address by Prof. Jim Stanbery. Tim Desmond read a moving poem. Vern and Kent Jones led us all in patriotic song, both Confederate and Irish. Richard Kline dazzled all of us with his music. Steve Madden awarded the Rubber Chicken to deserving recipient Steve Smith, Commander of Camp 302 San Diego.

**2004 Pasadena, Marriott Hotel**, 19-21 March. 10<sup>th</sup> Annual. Organized by Mike Schooling of Camp 302. Friday night reception at McMurphy's Tavern. We have 318 men in the Division, in 12 camps, and \$1562 in funds. We have a new camp in the Division: Tehachapi-Bakersfield A. S. Johnston Camp 2048. Sandy Ashdown-Turner reported that we have 2 Order of Confederate Rose Chapters and she is forming more. Commander Norred reported on his 9 months in office: First was the development of the Division Executive Committee. The Executive Committee consists of all the Camp Commanders, Division Adjutant, Division Lt. Commander and the Division Commander. The Past Commander was also in its makeup but Barron Smith is now the Commander of Camp 1631. We need to keep the Past Division Commander on the Executive Committee because his experience could lend valuable information to present Executive Committees. We made some simple adjustments to the Division Constitution that John Lewis our former Camp 302 Commander so graciously put together for us. New camp chartered in Dec 2003: 2048 Bakersfield. Saturday afternoon, free time, see list of tours. Sat evening, we had our banquet in the hotel, with speaker author of *A Heart Divided*, who told of singing Dixie in Russia while there for an adoption. Dr. Ro King receives Member of the Year Award.

**2003 Fresno, Piccadilly Inn**, 6-8 June. Our 9<sup>th</sup> Reunion, hosted by Chuck Norred of Camp 1804. Friday eve BBQ on the patio. Ten of our 11 California SCV Camps were represented, and Kenneth Ramsey, Camp 584, HQ. Our balance is \$1754. We have 285 men in our division. **We have 4 New Camps: Ventura County CSS Virginia 2062 formed** with men from several area camps, and new members; **Long Beach Capt Cameron E. Thom 2007**, formed with men from several camps; **Sparks Nevada Lt. Dixon--CSS Hunley Camp 2016**, founded by Camp 1208 Life Member Lee Cross, and Camp 1208 compatriot Hampton Brady, and by some 30 other men from northern Nevada and surrounding areas, including 4 from Utah; **Modesto Lt. Gen. Wade Hampton Camp 2023**, founded by men from Cosby Camp, HQ camp 584, and new members. **New Camps Forming: Bakersfield/Tehachapi** with 10 men from Camp 1208 or 584, and live in or near Bakersfield and Tehachapi. Bill Reed of Tehachapi is organizing the camp. **Chico:** Commander Lou Olker is working to establish a new camp for the 12 or so who live more than an hour's travel north of Sacramento. **Monterey:** We have the dedicated leader— Compatriot Rob Bechtel-- we need only a few more men from the cities of Carmel, Monterey, Salinas, Watsonville, Hollister, Soledad, and Santa Cruz to establish a camp. Compatriot Rob Bechtel of Carmel flies our 3rd National Confederate Flag over his home on many holidays, and has served as a leader of men in the U.S. Marine Corps. Ms. Sandra Ashdown-Turner of Whittier is chartering a State Society of the Order of Confederate Rose. Gary Waltrip took over from John Kindred in Fall of 2002 as Division Webmaster [www.scvcalifornia.net](http://www.scvcalifornia.net) **Division Newsletter:** I publish the *Vidette*, and have sent out 19 issues in the past

year to about 300 people all over the country. **Money for Real Daughter** in Oakland, Ms. Alma Grigsby, age 107. We passed the hat for the Caretaker and collected \$274, which Compatriot Paul Toland will deliver. **Constitution:** John Lewis leads us in adopting our new Constitution. Chuck Norred elected Division Commander, and Farrell Cooley as Lt Cmdr. Banquet speakers: Kermit Albritton and Neal Johnson. Wilfred W. Knight Award presented by Barron Smith to Vern Padgett, and Division Member of the Year Award presented by Chuck Norred to Vern Padgett. Memorial to Noel Estes, Division Adjutant and Treasurer for 16½ years, from April 1985 to Oct 2001. Noel passed on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2003, after a long battle with emphysema. Dance period music conducted by Cynthia Merrill Dance Studio.

**2002 Los Alamos Union Hotel**, 8<sup>th</sup> Annual California Division Convention, 7-9 June, organized by Camp 302 San Diego. Registration, \$75. Ro King reported on the hotel "Our flag flying from the balcony." Friday night BBQ and juleps on the patio. Camp 1208 L.A. has 96 men. Camp 302 San Diego reports 47 members. Camp 1770 Orange County reports a new book by Gordon Bricken. Andy Hill of 1804 Bell Camp reports on the Veteran's Day Parade. Dr. Maner Thorpe reports on MOS&B: 23 members spread from Eureka to Chula Vista. Dr. Ro King tells us about Noel Estes. Barron Smith of 1631 reports a Real Daughter, Alma Grigsby, aged 106, living in the San Jose camp area. Dr. Ro King, Division Historian, reported on camp projects and events. Thanks to Kyle Smith and Marilyn King for decorating the hotel. Luncheon in the Courtyard. The Memorial service dedicated Peter Coyner's CSA marker. At banquet, presentation on the CSS Hunley by Joe Alarid. I remember him holding up a hula hoop and telling us that this was the diameter of that submarine! After banquet: A Lantern Light Tour of the Maze in the back yard of the hotel.

**2001 Los Alamos Union Hotel**, 1-3 June. Hosted by Camp 1770 Orange County. Our 7<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Additional lodging at the Skyview Motel, for 1/3<sup>rd</sup> the price. That's where we stayed (Vern and Sandy). Friday evening Mint juleps on the lawn, courtesy Steve Holcomb, Camp 1770. They were so good that Joe Alarid, Cmdr of Camp 1631, reported that he almost got "flanked." Business Meeting: John Kindred's 3 proposals for committees: Heritage, Events, and Projects. Saturday afternoon memorial service and headstone dedication at Los Alamos Cemetery. Banquet guest speaker Don Locke as R. E. Lee. John Kindred received the Wilfred W. Knight Award for Dedication and Excellence.

**2000 Santa Maria Airport Regency Hotel, and Los Alamos Union Hotel**, 2-4 June. Hosted by Camp 1631 Santa Barbara. Our 6<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Registration \$65; hotel rooms \$59. Check-in was at Santa Maria; the Saturday business meeting, luncheon, and banquet, was 20 miles South at the Union Hotel in Los Alamos. Five camps were present. Camp reports: 1208: Ro King is taking the Walk of Flags fight to the LA Supervisors. Camp 1631: Prof. Laurence Talbott, author of *California in the War for Southern Independence*, has passed. Camp 302: Cmdr Mike Schooling and adjutant John Kindred reported. Camp 1770: Steven Holcomb reported that his camp is not dead, and has been marking graves. Camp 1804: Andy Hill present. Confederate Yacht Club commander General Bailey McCune reported that the Newport Yacht Club would allow use of the facilities at no charge. Division Cmdr Towery reported that there are 8 camps in the division. Camp 1440 needs a commander and an adjutant, as Randy Burroughs has left California. Ro King reported that California is funding most of the restoration of the Nathan Forrest boyhood home. Joe Alarid of Camp 1631 volunteered to write a checklist on "how to run a division convention." Elections: Jeff Towery stepped aside, and Barron Smith is elected Division Commander. After 6 years as commander, Jeff stated that it was time for new blood. Jeff received a standing ovation for the work he did during his 6 years as division commander. Rev. Carlson closed with the benediction. Luncheon Saturday after the business meeting was outside in the garden of the Union Hotel. Memorial services held at Los Alamos Cemetery for Peter Coiner. Outstanding SCV Award to Neil Estes, Division Signals Officer. He will begin publishing a division newsletter, *The Vidette*. Banquet at Union Hotel had presentation by Rev. Lou Carlson on the 3<sup>rd</sup> National Flag, and Judy Estes conducted the raffle. Sources: Joe Alarid, Sept 2000, *The Coastal Confederate*, Camp 1631 Newsletter, and Ro King, from *Aide-de-Camp*, July 2000, Camp 1208.

**1999 Long Beach, Sea Port Marina Hotel**, 25-27 June, 5<sup>th</sup> Annual California Division Convention, hosted by Camp 1208 Los Angeles, with Neil Estes as primary organizer; registration fee, \$30. In attendance were SCV CiC Rick Griffin, and SCV Executive Director Maitland Westbrook (former commander of Redlands Camp 1742). Six of our 8 camps were in attendance. We were welcomed by Long Beach City Councilman Jerry Schultz, who invited us to participate in that city's Nov. 6 Veteran's Day Parade. Division officers re-elected. Memorial service held at Long Beach Municipal Cemetery with CiC Griffin, 1<sup>st</sup> NC Cav Honor Guard. Saturday afternoon: Tour of the Banning Museum and the Drum Barracks, both in Wilmington. Banquet speaker was CSU Fullerton history Professor Wendy



Elliot, a professional genealogist. Sunday's memorial service had a 21-gun salute at Sunnyside Old Cemetery and flag ceremony, both led by Jim Ellingson of 1<sup>st</sup> NC Cavalry reenactors. Ken Gilliam received the Division's Outstanding Member of the Year Award.

**1998 Fresno, Sheraton Four Points Hotel**, on Blackstone, 12-14 June. Our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual. Convention Chair Barron Smith; Vice chair Lou Olker; Treasurer Ken Gilliam. Div Cmdr Jeff Towery presented the Camp Charter to the new San Joaquin Valley Camp, General Tyree Bell. Connie Moretti of UDC, and descendent of General Bell, presented the camp with pictures and mementos. Ceremony at grave of General Bell at Mount Hope Cemetery with a blessing by Woody Plaughter, a Real Son; tour of Mount Hope, and tour of Meux Home and Museum, which belonged to a Confederate doctor. Saturday afternoon: Adjutant Workshop, led by Jack Bridges, using guidelines from the Texas Division. Randy Burroughs, Div Webmaster, received Outstanding Member Award.

**1997 San Diego, Handlery Hotel**, 13-15 June, Hotel Circle in Mission Valley; 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual. Registration, \$65 per person. Ken Gilliam served as convention organizer. The San Diego Camp sponsored the Reunion. Jeff Towery reported that California has two new SCV camps, and presented Cmdr Steven Holcomb with a charter for the Orange County Camp. Noel Estes reported that we have 220 in our division. John Bell Hood is the largest camp with 100 members. Cmdr Ro King announced that Michael Wright, Judge Advocate, settled the lawsuit with the State of California over our displaying our materials at Fort Tejon, received an apology, a \$1,000 settlement for his fees, which he donated to the camp, and a place to meet and show our heritage. All Division officers were re-elected or reappointed. CiC Pete Orlebeck awarded Ro King for exceptional service. Jack Bridges, ATM Aide-de-Camp, came out from Texas to talk about how California could organize brigades, and presented us with an Adjutant's Handbook. Div Commander Jeff Towery awarded Steve Holcomb "Division Outstanding Person" award, and presented him with the Orange County Camp charter, one of two new camps formed this year. The memorial service was held at Mount Hope Cemetery, with CiC Orlebeck laying a wreath, and Real Son Woody Plaughter giving the eulogy. Source of most info here: Ro King's report in the July 1997 Camp 1208 Newsletter.

**1996 Concord, Sheraton Concord Hotel**. 17-19 May. "With our colors proudly flying from the flagpole" — (Ro King). The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reunion. Paul Toland, organizer, hosted by Camp 1627 Sacramento. Two Real Sons attended: Woody Plaughter and George Washington Plaughter (whose father served in the 7<sup>th</sup> Virginia Cavalry, and was 83 when he had his 21<sup>st</sup> child by his 3<sup>rd</sup> wife). Progress has been made for a 6<sup>th</sup> California Camp, in the Inland Empire. Camp 1208 reported a heritage violation: At a meeting of that camp at Fort Tejon, a park ranger forced Div Cmdr Towery to remove an SCV poster. Camp 1208 Cmdr Michael Wright informed her that this was against the law, and our constitutional rights had been violated, and he filed suit against the California Parks Commission. The Division had 209 members last year, with 106 in Camp 1208, according to Dr. Ro King. Cmdr. Camp 1627 Sacramento report given by Cmdr Russ Rider. More than 12 graves of Confederate Veterans have been located and memorialized, with help from UDC. Cmdr Towery and Chuck Bess displayed the California Division Flag, the Stars and Bars with the California Bear on the white bar, and "California Division, Sons of Confederate Veterans" displayed in the blue canton. The flag was hand made by Randy Burroughs and presented by Paul Toland as a gift to the Division, from Stainless Banner Camp 1440. Elections: Jeff Towery and Barron Smith re-elected, and Noel Estes re-appointed adjutant-- from 7 pages of notes by Deputy Adjutant Ken Gilliam, 20 May 1996. And from Randy Burrough's report in the Camp 1440 Newsletter of 24 May 1996: "All 5 camps were in attendance, with about 60 people there." The Wilfred W. Knight Award for outstanding service was presented to Adjutant Noel Estes. From Lou Olker, 6 May 2014: "Paul and I did not have a clue and were not under any pressure because, basically, we didn't know what the hell we were doing. All I remember were a lot of ice chests; for our Saturday morning meeting at 9 there were donuts and croissants left out in the hall on a stand by a previous 8 AM motivational meeting in an adjacent room and Paul and I confiscated them and their big coffee server and plastic cups. On a shoestring. But we all had fun and I was surprised how many men came up to Concord from Los Angeles. The Manager was a gal from Georgia, and when we arrived there was a big sign saying: "Welcome Sons of Confederate Veterans!" and the First National Flag and our new CA Division flag. It rained that night and Paul knocked on my door the next morning early and said, "We have to take down the State Flag! It rained last night and it is pink!" Alas! The Gay Confederatos! I think Paul sort of thought that at the time. He was a great guy and I miss him; don't know whatever happened to him. Can't find a trace."

**1995 Berkeley.** 5-7 May; planned as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual California Division Convention at the Berkeley Marina Marriott Hotel, with the Memorial Service for Confederate soldiers buried in Mt. View Cemetery in Oakland. Convention chairs were Chuck Bess of Pleasanton and Randy Burroughs of Suisun City. Registration, \$58 per person --from Ro King's copy of the Apr 1995 Camp 1208 *Aide-de-Camp*, with registration form cut out. Convention cancelled due to too few registrations. We lost our \$500 deposit.

**1994 Ventura, Double Tree Hotel,** 24-25 June; 1<sup>st</sup> Reunion. 36 attendees; members from all 5 camps attended, and we have a complete list of them. Hosted by Santa Barbara Camp 1631, Maner Thorpe, commanding. Welcome Letter to this, the first division convention, from Don Clotworthy, noted a real daughter living in Santa Maria, and Santa Barbara's Arlington Theater. Commander Maner Thorpe introduced ATM Cmdr Pete Orlebecke, who addressed the convention. Jeff Towery, Commander of Camp 1208 Los Angeles, chaired the business meeting. The division constitution, modelled on the Texas version, was unanimously adopted. Camp reports: 302 given by Lt Cmdr Gene Armistead; 1440 by Cmdr Chuck Bess; 1627 by Adj Frank Smith; 1631 by Adj Don Clotworthy, and 1208 by Adj Noel Estes, who reported that his camp had 130 members. A \$2 annual division due was adopted, after a \$5 annual dues was voted down by 3 of the 5 camps. Jeff Towery was elected Division Commander, and Barron Smith LtCmdr. After lunch in the hotel garden, Randy Burroughs of Camp 1440 presented on historic Confederate unit flags. There was a Confederate Memorial Service at the Carpentaria Cemetery, honoring 4 Confederates, led by Barron Smith. At the evening banquet, Cmdr Orlebecke gave the oath of office to the division officers. The evening's speaker was Gen. Bailey McCune, on California Confederates. Registration, \$45 per person. – These notes in part from Gene Armistead's convention minutes, and his article in the Camp 1208 *Aide-de-Camp*, October 1994.

*A Note on Sources:* I've compiled this history from my own notes—I attended reunions starting in 2001. I also used our camp and division newsletters, from Dr. Ro King, Noel Estes, and Dr. Maner Thorpe. Lou Olker provided comments on several early reunions; Tad Smith assisted with 2015, and Jim Stephens with 2016 and 2018. – Vern