

Huntington Beach Historical Society
CENTRAL PARK CIVIL WAR REENACTMENT
2007
AFTER ACTION EVENT REPORT



Photo by Amie Woodson

From the Huntington Beach Historical Society Reenactor Coordinator/Reed Settle
9/5/2007

To All Reenactors:

Neither campaigning nor wicked heat could keep the throngs of reenactors and public away from this year's 2007 Central Park (Huntington Beach) reenactment. The reenactor attendance was within 5% of last years numbers and might have set a new record were it not for the heat wave.

By 9 pm Friday night, 12 hours before the event officially started, it was obvious that the number of sutlers, civilian and military reenactors already setting up camp would ensure a great Civil War event.

Saturday morning found the Federal, Confederate and Civilian camps teeming with activity, and preparations being made for the upcoming battles.

But before any of this happened, a tremendous amount of preparation took place. As you know the Huntington Beach Historical Society (HBHS) is the organization that hosts this event. Kelly Rivers, the HBHS President, is the person responsible for assembling the staff that so expertly organizes and sets everything up for us to have such a great event.

Please note a few behind the scenes items the HBHS took care of to ensure a successful event for all:

- New water distribution device provided for the Confederate Camp.
- Park policy is to lock the public restrooms after 8 pm; the HBHS took care of keeping those restrooms open for the reenactors Saturday night.
- Pre registration was efficiently handled.
- The HBHS food line next to the registration was more efficient.
- At the conclusion of the event, instead of the traditional formation; holding the reenactors on the field while raffle tickets were drawn (especially in Sundays interminable heat), the HBHS decided to forgo the traditional raffle and instead drew tickets and posted the winners on a board at the registration booth.
- We were allowed unprecedented use of the park; and because of this we were able to craft battle scenarios using parts of the park never before used.

On my late night rounds to some of the camps Saturday night, I asked reenactors for feedback on the event. One common comment I kept hearing when describing this event was that it is the most relaxed and friendly event on their schedule. These comments came from members of reenacting organizations as well as those having no organizational affiliations.

The event included four excellent battle scenarios, more sutlers and booths than I have ever seen at HB before, a dance Saturday night plus church services Sunday morning.

In addition to the HBHS staff that made this event possible I would also like to acknowledge the exceptional job Col. Gary Fradella, his Chief of Staff Lt. Col. Al Haun and the rest of the Federal staff did. It was a pleasure working with them in preparation of this event, planning the battle scenarios, and polishing them up at officer's call.

And last but not least I want to note the great job Lt. Col. Jim Mitchum, my Chief of Staff and the rest of my Confederate staff in assisting me with this event. The spirit of cooperation between the Federal and Confederate staffs and Divisions, translated into exceptional battles and never did I hear any complaints about either side not taking hits.

The second battle on Saturday included a span of time that certainly made for a Civil War moment for many. During this battle an exchange erupted between the cavalry units which caused the infantry on both sides to pause their firing and focus on the hornet's nest of fire between these cavalry units. I have never heard that intensity of fire at any reenactment.

For those of you who missed the event, Wow, you missed a good one. For those that participated, thank you for your participation and support of the HBHS as well as enduring the extraordinary heat wave.

For both participants and non participants, here is one internet link for photographs that are available for viewing now. http://www.rockyou.com/show_my_gallery.php?source=ppsl&instanceid=82641257

www.garphoto.com will have photos for the 2007 event uploaded soon.

When additional links are available I will post them to the www.hartsengineers.com website along with other photos of the event.

I enjoyed fielding the questions before the event, working with the HBHS in preparing for the event, and look forward to the preparation of next year's event. In fact that preparation will probably start....tomorrow.

To ensure this report gets maximum distribution, please forward it to anyone on your personal Emailing list.

I look forward to next year's event and seeing all of you at Moorpark November 10-11, 2007.

Respectfully;

Reed Settle
Huntington Beach Historical Society
Reenactor Coordinator



Rare, recently unearthed shot of actual Civil War soldiers gathered in Huntington Beach, circa 1905
(Courtesy Huntington Beach Historical Society)