



CHRONICLE OF THE AZTEC CLUB OF 1847

Military Society of the Mexican War

www.walika.com/aztec.htm

Fall, 1999

Our 152ND Year

Editor: Rick Breithaupt

Greetings

Your officers and Executive Committee have worked hard this past year to build on the momentum emanating from our successful sesquicentennial celebration in 1997-1998. The result has been a very successful 152nd year.

The Club elected to membership 16 gentlemen, including several descendants of original members. All told, between 1996-1999 the Club has elected 47 new members, an achievement of which we should all be proud. As was widely recognized by the founding members over one hundred years ago, membership is our life's blood. We must vigilantly strive to increase it. It is the means by which we pass along the cherished traditions and memories of our original members.

While our growth in membership bodes well for the Club's survival, we must remain mindful that membership only grows older and the inevitable decreases our numbers. Recognizing this, the Executive Committee developed a short form application for membership which you recently should have received in the mail. It is our hope that each member will take advantage of this opportunity to broaden the representation of his own family in the Aztec Club. Membership is "the gift that keeps giving", something personal, that will create a special bond between you. Take a few minutes to help by identifying a family member and returning the completed application.

Our Internet web site has been most successful, attracting over 30,000 "hits" per month. Many visitors are students researching the Mexican War or an original member of the Club. The web site includes nearly 500 pages of content and hundreds of photographs, maps and artwork. If you have online access you should stop by, as it is constantly evolving.

The Sesquicentennial History remains popular with several orders having been received from interested persons in Mexico.

As one millennium comes to a conclusion, and another awaits, we celebrate the fragile mantle that has been handed to us. The Aztec Club now enters its third century, the 21st century, something one wonders whether our ancestors could have imagined. We must do all things to preserve what they began, to cherish and nurture it so that we can pass it along to the next generation. *Richard Breithaupt, Jr., President*

ANNUAL MEETING SET Chevy Chase, Maryland October 9, 1999

The 152nd Annual Meeting of the Aztec Club of 1847 will be held at Chevy Chase Country Club, Chevy Chase, Maryland on Saturday evening, October 9th. The business meeting will commence at 6:00 pm followed by a reception at 7:00 pm and banquet dinner at 8:00 pm. [White tie, black tie, mess dress or uniform, with decorations.] Spouses and invited guests are welcome.

Ronald Becker, Director, Restoration of the Star Spangled Banner Flag, will be the featured speaker. Mr. Becker will speak about the Smithsonian's restoration efforts of the original American flag flown over Fort McHenry, near Baltimore Harbor, during the War of 1812.

Cost for the dinner is \$50.00 per person. Reservations are required and must be received by the Treasurer on the enclosed form with payment not later than September 30th. Please make checks payable to the Aztec Club of 1847.

and he shall strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command, to obey and support him accordingly; and he is to cherish and follow such orders and directions from him, as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of America, and to see set over him, according to law, and the rules and discipline of war: This Commission to be in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being.

Given under my hand at the City of Washington, this twenty eighth day of May, 1846, in the year one thousand eight hundred and forty six, and in the twentieth year of the Independence of the United States.

U. S. President

Signature of War



*Brevet Commission conferring the rank of
Brevet Major-General to Zachary Taylor, May 28, 1846*

This commission was among the possessions of Zachary Taylor, not currently on exhibit but included in a special exhibit prepared by the Louisiana State Museum commemorating the Aztec Club's Spring Meeting at New Orleans.

Adolphus Gustavus deRussy

(1818-1891)

Born at Brooklyn, NY the scion of a military family of long standing, his father, Bvt. Brig. Gen. René E. deRussy and his uncle, Lt. Col. Lewis G. deRussy, CSA, were both graduates of West Point, and veterans of the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. His grandfather was a Midshipman in the Revolutionary Navy.

Lt. Adolphus DeRussy was breveted to 1st Lieutenant for "gallantry and meritorious service" at the Battles of Contreras and Churubusco. He received a brevet to Captain for "gallant and meritorious service" at Chapultepec.

At the outbreak of the Civil War deRussy was a Captain in the regular army. He was highly commended by George B. McClellan during the Peninsular Campaign for bringing "two guns . . . into action under very difficult circumstances." During the same campaign he commanded the Artillery Reserve for Heintzelman's III Corps and was again praised for conduct at Malvern Hill, winning brevets to Major for bravery in Battle at Fair Oaks, VA, and Lieutenant Colonel, for bravery at Malvern Hill.

deRussy commanded the guns at Burnside's left at Fredericksburg. He was commissioned a Brigadier General, U. S. Vols., with rank from May 23, 1862, and placed in command of the Defenses of Washington South of the Potomac. He was breveted to Major-General, U. S. Volunteers, and Brigadier-General, U. S. Army, March 13, 1865.



Adolphus Gustavus deRussy

Gen. DeRussy was among those members of the Club attending its historic meeting at Wayne, PA on September 15, 1881. Gathering in Center City Philadelphia, members and guests were taken by special railroad car to Hotel Bellevue, an elegant luxury hotel then recently completed in suburban Wayne Station, built by George W. Childs and Anthony J. Drexel.

At this meeting Gen. Ulysses S. Grant made known his intention to become President of the Aztec Club, and was elected Vice President. Due to the absence of the President, Gen. Winfield Scott Hancock, Gen. Grant presided. Seated on either side of him were Gen. William T. Sherman and Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. Also at his table were Pennsylvania Governor Henry Hoyt and A. J. Drexel, guests. A transcription of the proceedings, and speeches, is contained in *Aztec of 1847 Military Society of the Mexican War: A Sesquicentennial History, 1847-1997*.

Members Elected Since Last Issue

James David Boyle, MD

2nd Lt. [Brig. Gen., USV] James Murrell Shackelford
4th Regiment, KY Vols.

Lt. Col. William Albert Forbes, USAF Ret.

2nd Lt. Jesse J. Hill
1st Infantry, TN Vols.

Rev. Barry Christopher Howard

Lt. Col. (Bvt. Col.) [Paymaster, USA] Joshua Howard
15th Infantry, USA

Andrew Graham Hunt

1st Lt. (Bvt. Capt. & Maj.) [Maj. Gen.] Henry Jackson Hunt
2nd Artillery, USA

David Howard Peterson

2nd Lt. [Col., CSA] George Watson Carr
Voltigeurs and Foot Riflemen, USA

Robert Scot Stelman

Capt. [Col.] Charles Henry Innes
Co. K, 1st Regiment, NY Vols

Miles George Turpin

Commo. Thomas ap Catesby Jones
Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Squadron, USN

Miles Joseph Turpin

Commo. Thomas ap Catesby Jones
Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Squadron, USN

(xx) Denotes highest rank achieved during the Mexican War.

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John deRussy

Col. John H. deRussy, USAF Ret., a recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, passed away at Holmes Regional Medical Center, Melbourne, FL, on February 20, 1999. He had been a member of the Aztec Club since 1956, by right of direct descent from 2nd Lieutenant Adolphus Gustavus deRussy, 4th Artillery, an original member.

Originally from Baltimore, following a 31-year military career Col. DeRussy moved to the Central Florida community of Indian Harbour. He had received two Silver Stars, two Legion of Merits, the Purple Heart, ten Air Medals, six European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medals, French Croix de Guerre avec Palme, Belgian Croix de Guerre avec Palme, British Distinguished Flying Cross, and numerous other decorations. Following his retirement, Col. DeRussy was employed as a logistics engineer and project manager by the Boeing Corporation at the Kennedy Space Center. He also appeared in several motion pictures, including *My Girl* and *Passenger 57*, and in television shows including *Unsolved Mysteries* and *America's Most Wanted*. He was a technical advisor for the movie *12 O'Clock High*.

The deRussys have been represented in the Aztec Club since its origination, the most recent addition being John H. deRussy, Jr., elected to membership in 1996.

SPRING TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS

The Club's 1999 Spring Meeting was held May 19-22 at New Orleans. It commenced with dinner on Wednesday, May 19 at famous Commander's Palace, located in the Garden District. On Thursday morning members and guests took the Big Easy City Tour, traveling uptown to the "American" sector to trace the route of the St. Charles Avenue streetcar line, the oldest continuously operated street railway in the world. After traveling out Esplanade Avenue, shaded by a canopy of live oak, a typical above-ground cemetery was seen, and the 1,500-acre City Park and Bayou St. John.

Thursday afternoon featured the Garden District. The second oldest and most traditional area of New Orleans, the Garden District contains beautiful 19th century antebellum mansions set in spacious gardens. Attendees traveled to the district via a St. Charles Streetcar and toured a private home viewing a handsome collection of furniture and *object d'art*, marveling at its skillful adaptation for 20th century living. A French Quarter walking tour occurred on Friday morning. A personal stroll through the quaint streets of the *Vieux Carre* acquainted everyone with the historic beginnings of the city. Professional guides explained the customs, folklore and unique architecture in this European corner of America. Lacy grillwork, secluded courtyards, fascinating antique and pastry shops all symbolic of the captivating lifestyle of the *Vieux Carre*.

Highlighting this informal tour was a visit to the Louisiana State Museum where, courtesy of Aztec Club member Carlo Capomazza, members and guests viewed artifacts belonging to his great⁴-grandfather, Gen. Zachary Taylor, an original member of the Club. Several of these had not been on display in years.

Next on the itinerary was the Beauregard-Keyes House, built in 1826 and home to Confederate General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, an original member of the Aztec Club. Following a visit to Longue Vue, a privately owned estate replete with formal English gardens, pastoral woods, and Greek Revival mansion, the Club visited the New Orleans Museum of Art where Degas was the featured exhibit. Saturday featured the Bayou Country, with a boat excursion deep inside the swamp and a stop for a Cajun lunch. The weekend program concluded Saturday evening with dinner at Bella Luna, an elegant and fashionable restaurant on the Mississippi River.



Carlo Capomazza next to a bust of his great⁴-grandfather, Gen. Zachary Taylor, an original member of the Aztec Club.



Broadside from Zachary Taylor's Presidential Campaign

Each letter of Taylor's name is decorated with a scene of the Mexican War. The Aztec Club donated a membership medal to the Louisiana State Museum which has agreed to include it in its continuous exhibit on Gen. Taylor.

INSIGNIA AVAILABLE



Our membership medal is simply exquisite, struck from a recently new set of dies engraved by artisans for Bailey, Banks & Biddle using an original Aztec Club medal as a model.

The 1½" medal, suspended from a Mexican green and blue ribbon, bears on its obverse the Mexican Eagle and wording *City of Mexico — Army of Occupation* in high relief over green enamel. The reverse depicts an American Eagle and wording *Aztec Club — U. S. Army 1847* over red enamel. Pricing, which is subject to change, is as follows:

Full Size Medal

Silver, w/Gold Plating	\$ 85.00
Gold Filled*	\$ 90.00
10K Gold	\$ 515.00
14K Gold	\$ 730.00
Bronze, w/ Gold Plating	\$ 40.00
Silver, w/ Gold Plating	\$ 45.00
Gold Filled*	\$ 50.00
10K Gold	\$ 150.00
14K Gold	\$ 180.00

*Recommended for those not ordering 10K or 14K.

Medals are special-order items requiring written authorization from the Club. Contact the Treasurer or President for an Authorization Chit.

AVAILABLE FROM THE TREASURER

Blazer Patch	\$ 35.00
Lapel Pin	\$ 45.00
Lapel Pin -- 1880's Reproduction	\$10.00
Tie (four-in-hand)	\$ 35.00

Ties are made of finest silk in Aztec Club colors.

SESQUICENTENNIAL HISTORY AVAILABLE

Sesquicentennial History \$ 89.95 + \$10 .00 shipping

Printed on acid-free paper, hardbound, with gold foil embossing and handsome dust jacket. 1505 pages. ISBN: 1886085056.

Order the Sesquicentennial History at:
Aztec Club of 1847
Box 8454, Universal City, CA 91618-8454



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**Founded by the Officers of the U. S. Army
Mexico City — October 13, 1847**