



CHRONICLE OF THE AZTEC CLUB OF 1847

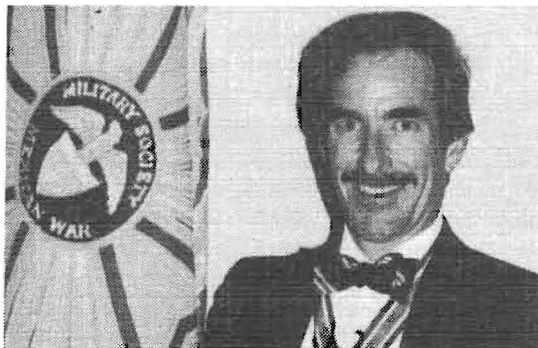
Military Society of the Mexican War

Spring, 1998

Our 151st Year

Editor: Rick Breithaupt

Greetings



President Richard H. Breithaupt, Jr.

Activity since the last issue of *The Chronicle* has been at a feverish pace. Last October, 31 members and guests journeyed to Mexico City for the Sesquicentennial Meeting of the Aztec Club. This memorable tour lasted ten days during which time we re-traced, in reverse, the path of our ancestors from Mexico City to Vera Cruz.

In the past year, the Club has admitted to membership seventeen gentlemen. We are indebted to Capt. Thomas J. Turpin, USN (Ret.), Registrar, who has promptly processed each application received.

The Club has two new forms of insignia available for purchase from the Treasurer. A handsome bullion blazer patch, made possible through the efforts of Capt. Turpin and Club member Patrick Griffin, III, is available at \$25. A gold-filled pin, made to double as a lapel pin or tie-tac, is available at \$45.

The sesquicentennial history of the Club has been completed and it is currently at the printer. A separate flyer to be mailed in the next month will announce details and include an order form.

The Aztec Club is on the Internet. The site is up and running at the following URL:

<http://www.walika.com/aztec.htm>

Our Web Site includes a brief overview of the Aztec Club's history, copies of historic documents, numerous links, and is profusely illustrated. Future plans include making available a database of Mexican War officers that interested researchers can explore.

Equally exciting is this year's Spring Meeting. Our visit to Natchez, Mississippi will be both enjoyable and memorable. I hope you will be able to join us on June 4-7, 1998. You can help perpetuate the Aztec Club by sponsoring a family member or friend for membership. Do it today!
Richard H. Breithaupt, Jr., President

SPRING MEETING NATCHEZ

June 4-7, 1998

The Aztec Club will hold its Spring Meeting at beautiful Natchez, Mississippi, where 150 years ago the Aztec Club's first President, Major-General John A. Quitman, hosted reunions of veterans of the Mexican War at his plantation.

Members and guests will stay at the plantation home of Gen. Quitman, Monmouth Plantation, a National Historic Landmark. Built c1818, the home and grounds have been beautifully restored over a twenty-year period by proprietors Ron and Lani Riches, of Los Angeles. Monmouth is today rated one of the "Top 12 Inns in America" and among the "Top 10 Most Romantic Places in the USA". A brochure about Monmouth Plantation accompanies this issue of *The Chronicle*.

By special arrangement, a block of rooms have been reserved at discounted rates. A limited number of rooms are available: deluxe suites at \$160/night; other rooms at \$150/night. These rates include room tax, full Southern breakfast each morning and a tour of the mansion. Reservations for rooms should be made directly with Monmouth Plantation by calling 1-800-828-4531 and mentioning the Aztec Club tour. **Rooms are available on a first-come first-serve basis.** All reservations must be made by May 4th. If you find no rooms available, if asked the staff of Monmouth will assist you in obtaining other accommodations. You should plan to arrive in Natchez on Thursday afternoon. The closest airports are Baton Rouge, LA (90 mi.) and Jackson, MS (150 mi.). Transportation from the airport to Natchez is "on your own".

While arrangements are still pending, the planned program includes a one-day bus tour on Friday, June 5th. Departing after breakfast, we will ride a short distance to Vicksburg and participate in a 16-mile guided tour of the Vicksburg National Military Park, situated on more than 1,700 acres. More than 1,260 memorials, monuments, statues, tablets, bronze portraits and markers honor those who participated in the 1863 campaign. We will also visit the USS Cairo Museum which displays recovered portions of the ironclad *Cairo*, sunk in the Yazoo River north of Vicksburg in 1862. Following lunch, we will take the short trip to the Jackson Arts Pavilion to view "Splendors of Versailles", the royal treasures of the Versailles Palace. This exhibit is being shown exclusively in only one American city, Jackson, Mississippi. We will likely have dinner in Jackson.

Saturday, June 6th will include a local tour of Natchez including its famed antebellum homes. The organized program will conclude with a five-course candlelight dinner at Monmouth Plantation on Saturday evening. For those with more time, New Orleans is a few hours away.

The Tour package costs \$200 per person. This price includes the cost of the bus trip, tour of Vicksburg National Military Park, USS Cairo Museum and Splendors of Versailles, and Saturday evening's candlelight dinner. Each person is responsible for all other meals (breakfasts included with room Fri., Sat. & Sun.). Checks, payable to the Aztec Club, must be received by the President not later than May 15, 1998. Tour package is non-refundable.

To participate in this interesting spring outing, do the following: 1.) Make your hotel reservations on or before May 4, 1998 by calling Monmouth Plantation directly; 2.) Make your Tour reservation by remitting a check to the President, by May 15, 1998; 3.) Make appropriate land arrangements to Natchez. Should you have questions or require assistance, please call Club President Rick Breithaupt at 818-609-0800.

1997 ANNUAL MEETING

On Saturday Oct. 11, 1997 the Aztec Club held its Sesquicentennial Meeting, convened in the very rooms where many of our ancestors had been. We were at the former estate of Senor Boca Negra, Mexico's Minister to the United States. This magnificent structure, built by artisans in the 18th-century as a palace for the Viceroy of Spain, is located at the corner of Cinco de Mayo and Isabel la Catolica avenues just off the famed Plaza de la Constitución, or Zócalo. When the Americans occupied Mexico City it became the Aztec Club. The Pedroza family, owners of this historic building for more than fifty years, had only recently completed a faithful restoration of the structure to its former splendor. We were impressed with its hand-painted tiles, ornate moldings, original dark wood flooring, and shrine to the Virgin Guadalupe, which our ancestors must have enjoyed 150 years earlier.

Imaginations ran wild at the thought of what these walls had seen. Perhaps Sam Grant, sitting over there with life-long friends James Longstreet and Cadmus Wilcox playing cards. Or, maybe Cump Sherman having a beer with Joe Johnston. They, too, had a friendship that lasted a lifetime. Perhaps over there had been George B. McClellan smoking a cigar with John B. Magruder.

Three new members were elected to membership at this historic meeting. Upon recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the offices of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Registrar were filled by unanimous vote.

That evening the Club held its gala sesquicentennial dinner overlooking the grand Zócalo, where 150 years ago Winfield Scott's army entered as it captured the National Palace. We dined at the Gran Hotel, a fine example of turn-of-the-twentieth-century architecture. The lobby of this five story marble structure features a spectacular Tiffany skylight and gilded open cage elevators. From a balcony we looked across the grand square at the National Palace.

It was decided that the next Annual Meeting be held on Saturday, October 10, 1998, at Washington, D. C.

AZTEC CLUB MERCHANDISE

Ties \$35 Blazer Patch \$25 Lapel Pin \$45
Reproduction:

Enamel Club Lapel Button (c1880s) \$10

Full-size and miniature membership medals are special-order items requiring an authorization chit from the Club. Send your order to:

Cdr. C. Lansdowne Hunt, USN (Ret.)
Treasurer, Aztec Club of 1847
9101 MacMahon Drive
Burke, VA 22015-1621

1998 OFFICERS

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer
Registrar

Mr. Richard H. Breithaupt, Jr.
Capt. Thomas J. Turpin, USN (Ret.)
Hon. William W. Huss, Jr.
Cdr. C. Lansdowne Hunt, USN (Ret.)
Capt. Thomas J. Turpin, USN (Ret.)

Members of the Executive Committee

Hon. Raymond L. Drake
Hon. Alexander R. Early, III
Mr. David L. Whelchel, Jr.

Council

(Living Past Presidents)

Mr. Frederick T. Drum Hunt
Capt. Roy Campbell Smith, III, USNR (Ret.)
Col. William Leland Hires, PAARNG (Ret.)
Capt. Samuel Cooper Dawson, USNR (Ret.)
Maj. Stirling Stokely Wilson, (Ret.)
Nicholas Donnell Ward, Esq.
Cdr. John Conway Hunt, USNR (Ret.)
Joseph Wright Stanley, Esq.
Capt. Thomas J. Turpin, USN (Ret.)
Cdr. C. Lansdowne Hunt, USN (Ret.)
Hon. Richard Bender Abell

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

New Members Elected Since Last Issue

Elected to Membership

Dr. Paul Leslie Brent, Jr., Ed.D.

Russell Creveling Campbell

Thomas Pelham Curtis

Brig. Gen. John C. Fell

James Edward Hartung, Jr.

William David Holliday, Esq.

Damon Alexander Huss

Matthew Louis Huss

Stephan Murray Lieske

David Barton Miller

Robert Emmet Seibels, III

Col. Albert Jefferson Twigg

Samuel Huss Wainwright

Col. Benjamin Buford Williams
USAF (Ret.)

Joseph Morgan Wootten

By Right of Descent from

Capt. Arthur Campbell Cummings
Co. K, 11th Infantry, USA

Col. William B. Campbell
1st TN Vols.

2d Lt. Henry C. Pratt
2d Artillery, USA

Surgeon Daniel Smith Green
Sloop Dale, Pacific Squadron, USN
Capt. Robert Edward Lee
Engineers, USA

2nd Lt. James Holliday
3rd KY Infantry

Asst. Surg. William Alexander Harris
Razee Independence, Pacific Sqn., USN
Asst. Surg. William Alexander Harris
Razee Independence, Pacific Sqn., USN

2nd Lt. Lawrence Berry Washington
VA Vols.

1st Lt. Thomas Jonathan Jackson
1st Artillery, USA

Col. John Jacob Seibels
Btn. of AL Vols.

Brig. Gen. David Emanuel Twigg
Commander, 2nd Division, USA

Asst. Surg. William Alexander Harris
Razee Independence, Pacific Sqn., USN

1st Lieutenant Abraham Buford
1st Dragoons, USA

Maj. William John Clarke
Co. I, 12th Regt., USA

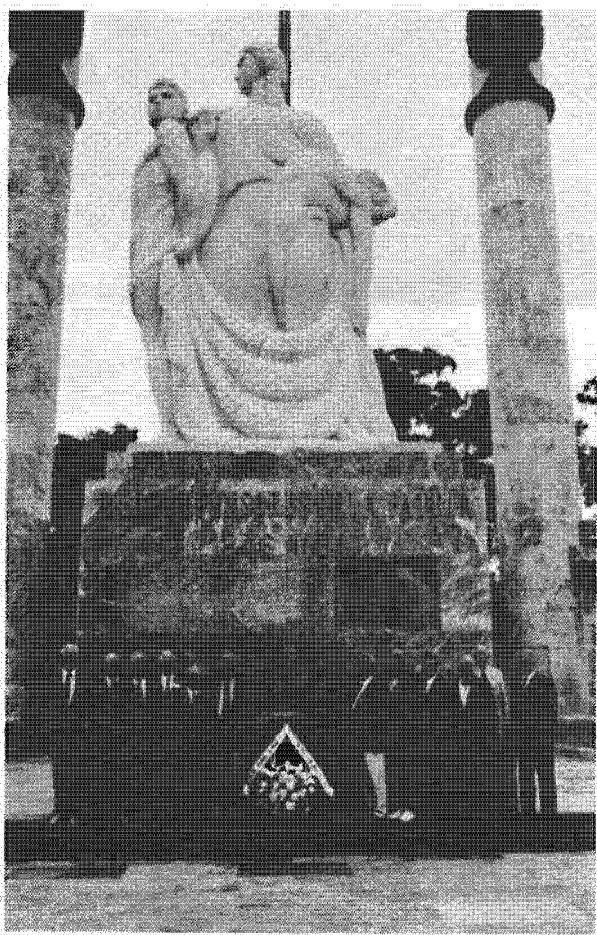
HIGHLIGHTS OF MEXICO

Our mission was one of peace and harmony. We came to honor the bravery of all who fought in the war — both the victors and the vanquished. We came to celebrate 150 years of peace and over the next week honored the bravery of the valiant defenders of Chapultepec, our own forefathers and their comrades in arms, and the treaty signed in 1848.

At the Monumento de los Niños Héroes we presented a wreath and a stirring tribute to the cadets who valiantly defended the Castle, then Mexico's military academy, to their deaths. The Cadet Guard participating in our tribute, provided by the Mexican government, seemed a fitting reminder to us all. The Club was paid a distinct honor when the Mexican Government asked that the President sign the official Book of Honor, normally reserved only for heads of state. At the American Cemetery, located just minutes away, we placed a wreath at the monument marking the site where 750 Americans who died in battle for the city silently lay, known today only to God.



Members at American Cemetery, Mexico City



Members and wreath at Monumento de los Niños Héroes

On October 9th, while traveling from Mexico City to Querétaro we stopped at the early 16th century Franciscan town of Tula. On a hill just to the north archaeologists had discovered the remains of the Toltec capital of Tollán. We visited the ruins of the capital and chief ceremonial center with its famous Giants, the Temple of Tiahuizcalpantecuitli, the Burnt Palace and the Coatepantli sites.

Upon our arrival at the city of Querétaro, in 1848 the provisional capital of the fleeing Mexican government, we placed a wreath in the very room where Nicholas P. Trist, on behalf of the United States, and Luis G. Cuevas, Bernardo Couto and Miguel Atristain, on behalf of the Mexican government, signed the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo in 1848, ending the Mexican War. The splendid beauty of this city, now a commercial center of nearly 1 million inhabitants, is matched only by its historic importance as four of Mexico's most significant events occurred there.

On Oct. 10, during our journey from Querétaro to Mexico City we stopped at the ruins of San Juan Teotihuacan, the most widely known and accessible of Mexico's major archaeological sites.

The next day we journeyed a short distance to Churubusco, once a garrisoned convent, now home to Mexico's Museum of Intervention, where we viewed a starkly different interpretation of the war. A commemorative exhibition explained how Mexico had lost one-half of its territory to the invading American armies. Upon discovering we were Americans, the Museum employee at the gift shop asked if we were there to honor the San Patricios, perhaps not realizing that these Irishmen who had become heroes to the Mexicans were traitors to the United States.

The following morning we set out on board our luxurious bus for the journey south and east toward Vera Cruz. We followed faithfully, in reverse, the path of our ancestors — much of the way traversing the National Highway which parallel the dirt trails, mountains and plains the advancing force took. We visited Cholula, the colonial city famous for its 365 churches and gigantic Teocali, and saw Rosario Chapel and the magnificent Cathedral at Puebla. We stopped for lunch at the quaint Molino San José del Puente before proceeding along the road to Vera Cruz.

Following our epicurean meal, we continued on through Perote, Jalapa and Cerro Gordo before arriving at Vera Cruz late Sunday evening. We "camped" the next two evenings at Fiesta Americana, a new five-star hotel located on the very beach, opposite Sacrificio Island, where the Marines landed in 1847. We relived the amphibious landing, which was composed of 67 surf boats, each holding 75 men, under cover of the guns of our fleet, commanded by Commodore Conner, with brilliant naval officers that included Commodores Matthew C. Perry and Josiah Tatnall, and Captain John Henry Aulick, who commanded the Naval Battery and signed the Articles of Capitulation on behalf of the Navy. We visited the Castle San Juan d'Ulloa, the fortress upon which for three days and nights five American siege batteries, commanded alternately by Captain Aulick, Captain Robert E. Lee and Captain Isaac Mayo, rained red ruin.

Having actually traveled the same routes, we gained a much better understanding of the Mexican War experiences of our forefathers.



Top: Members walk toward the Monumento de los Niños Héroes, seen below Chapultepec Castle; Bottom: Assembling before the Monument

