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# *Battle Cry*

Founded 1961,  
Newsletter of the Sacramento Civil War Round Table  
P.O. BOX 254702  
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<http://sacramentocwrt.com/>



## **President's Message**

I am happy to report that our November Conference was well received and our splendid group of speakers did a magnificent job of enlightening and entertaining our delighted guests. Thanks to the hard work by our Chairman Paul Ruud, Silver Williams, Dennis and Garda Kohlmann, George W. Foxworth, Barbara Leone, Nicholas Scivoletto, and the staff of the Crowne Plaza Hotel Sacramento. All went well.

Also, we are grateful for speaker transportation from and to the airport by Dennis Kohlmann, Scott and Don Hayden, all who contributed auction items, including George and Joan Beitzel; book donors Duane Benell and Jane Jackson; Garda Kohlmann's beautiful personally created and designed quilt; auctioneer and speaker Michael Oddenino's skills; Barbara Leone's multiple auction items personally provided; Silver Williams' excellent work on the Conference Program, and all who attended from all over the West Coast who helped make this annual effort a success.

Finally, I thank Fred Bohmfalk for suggesting we provide two Jerry Russell Awards, one to Jack Davis and the other to Paul Ruud and for asking Ted Savas who presented them so graciously and effectively. I have not mentioned all who contributed but am grateful to all who made this annual effort another success.

I have received a special thank you from Jack Davis who was delighted to receive this Russell Award which has honored a man who worked ceaselessly for many years to establish round tables throughout the country and was a spokesman for those we honor who gave so much for the preservation for our country. I am also proud to know that the Award was created by members of California Round Tables including one of our own in Sacramento.

This will be my last President's Message and I intend to remain a member and heartily encourage those of us who care to involve themselves in this enterprise to consider accepting a Board position. I have benefited immensely from the experience over the years.

Don't miss the December 13th meeting for my talk on "**Major Jonathan Letterman.**" See you there.

**Merry Christmas.**

**Don Hayden, Vice President**

**MINUTES**  
**SACRAMENTO CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE**  
**Wednesday, November 8, 2017**  
**HOF BRAU RESTAURANT, 2500 WATT AVENUE, SACRAMENTO**

**ATTENDANCE – 00**

**MEMBERS – 00:**

**GUESTS – 00:**

1. There was no meeting due to the 2017 West Coast Civil War Conference that was sponsored by the Sacramento Civil War Round Table.
2. The next Board Meeting will be Wednesday, December 13, 2017 at Brookfield's Restaurant at 10:00 AM.

**Barbara Leone, Secretary**

**Treasurer's Report**

The cash balance on November 8, 2017 was \$5,995.47. There was no raffle since there was no meeting.

**George W. Foxworth, Treasurer**

## **Thanks to Don Hayden**

The Sacramento CWRT speaker for December is Don Hayden who, with little notice, graciously agreed to fill in for the originally scheduled Bob Bundy, who had to withdraw due to his son's serious illness. Don's decision to headline the program is in keeping with the spirit of dedication to our group he has long exhibited. As most members know, over the years, Don has served several times as SCWRT President, as well as in every other official capacity. Don has represented SCWRT with his time, thoughtfulness, friendliness, and willingness to advance learning and sustain Civil War history and battlefields. With his late wife, our beloved Scottie, he has even played host to guest speakers in their home several times.

Don has previously made many interesting presentations to our group, so I am confident this December presentation will conclude 2017 on a high note.

I will be in Colorado for a special one-time event but will be with the group in spirit, knowing everyone will be enjoying a wonderful holiday event, plus cake.

Please welcome Don warmly — and Thank You Again, Don, for taking on the challenge!

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

**Submitted by Silver Williams, Program Director**

# Coming Programs for 2017 & 2018

Date	Speaker	Topic
December 13th	Donald J. Hayden	"Major Jonathan Letterman"
January 10th	Tim & Virginia Karlberg	"To Be Determined"
February 14th	Bernie Quinn	"Wyman White, Sharpshooter"
March 14th	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
April 11th	To Be Determined	To Be Determined
May 9th	To Be Determined	To Be Determined

## **2018 Membership**

The 2018 membership renewal is due as of January 1, 2018. The dues are \$20.00 and you can renew at a monthly meeting or send to the Treasurer through the mail. For all checks, make them payable to **Sacramento Civil War Round Table** and send them to

George W. Foxworth  
9463 Salishan Court  
Sacramento, CA 95826-5233

Remember, you can also pay at any monthly meeting.

## **NEWSLETTER CIVIL WAR ARTICLES**

Civil War articles/book reviews are welcome. The submission deadline is the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for that month's **Battle Cry**. However, you can submit articles at anytime. Please submit your items in Microsoft Word or regular email to:

[gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gwfoxworth@sbcglobal.net)

Do not submit files that I cannot edit.

The **Battle Cry** is the monthly newsletter of the Sacramento CWRT. Submissions are subject to availability of space and size limitations. Submissions do not necessarily reflect the views of the organization or the Editor. The official address of this organization is: Sacramento Civil War Round Table, Post Office Box 254702, Sacramento, CA 95865-4702. <http://www.sacramentocwrt.org> is the web site address. Check the web for past newsletter editions and information about the group.

# 2017 West Coast Civil War Conference

by Silver N. Williams

Dearest Sacramento CWRT Host Conference Members (Paul Ruud; Don Hayden; George Foxworth; Barbara Leone; Dennis Kohlmann; Richard Sickert; Nick Scivoletto),

It was an unsurpassed pleasure to be with all of you for the West Coast Civil War Conference November 10 - 12!

Sitting with George and Barbara and Nick at the Registration Table while meeting and greeting each conferee was exciting and fun! Another opening of another show! George did his usual outstanding job keeping all the names and places and charges straight — he is a marvel every year. This year, he was a phenomenon! His presence made everything seem normal, despite being aware it wasn't quite normal. I won't mention each aspect of the Conference but it all went so well, I was proud to be one of the Host Committee! We've put on other good Conferences, but this one was a highlight.

An unexpected highlight for all of us was Paul Ruud winning the Jerry Russell Award! It is a well-deserved honor for all his many years of cheerful service and quiet leadership. I am delighted that Paul won and was also tickled to see his vaunted Norwegian reserve dissolve (almost) into tears of modesty and happiness.

Everything during the weekend flowed smoothly; the speakers and the audience were wonderful — relaxed, poised, and instructive. But let's not overlook the attention we received from the Crowne Plaza personnel. They were like party hosts, paying attention to every detail and making each person feel like a beloved guest. They kept everything running smoothly and made everyone feel especially welcome. They were marvelous!

Despite making her nervous maiden venture into undertaking the thankless task of obtaining items to raffle and overseeing guardianship of treasures such as Garda's fabulous Sanitary Commission quilt, Barbara displayed a great eye for detail and competent control of it all. You were swell, Barbara! Applause. Applause. Applause.

Finally, I feel deep contentment with having helped present another worthwhile event and keeping the Jerry Russell torch aflame. It's very satisfying to be even a small part of a vibrant exploration of American history. Onward into the future!

I am honored to be your fellow and friend.

## **A Report On The 33rd Annual West Coast Civil War Conference** by George W. Foxworth

The 33rd Annual West Coast Civil War Conference was held on November 10 - 12 2017, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Northeast in Sacramento, California.

The Conference was hosted by the Sacramento Civil War Round Table (CWRT). **“Lesser Known Civil War Battles”** was the theme and many enlightening presentations by the distinguished speakers filled the weekend. The speakers were Dr. Brian S. Wills, William C. Davis, Thomas Y. Cartwright, James Stanbery, Theodore P. Savas, Michael L. Oddenino, and Ronald Perisho. Also in attendance were Lee Merideth, Bob Hubbs, and other Civil War enthusiasts throughout California.

The Elk Grove CWRT was represented by Tim and Ginny Karlberg.

The Sacramento CWRT was represented by Jim Armstrong, Fred Bohmfalk, George W. Foxworth, Alan Geiken, Don Hayden, Wayne and Nina Henley, Chris & Rebecca Highsmith, Wayne Imberi, Jane Jackson, James Juanitas, Arnold Kunst, Joseph & Michelle Matalone, Dennis and Garda Kohlmann, Barbara Leone, Kim Grace Long, Ron Perisho, Paul and Patty Ruud, Nancy B. Samuelson, Nicholas Scivoletto, Richard Sickert, Michael Werner, and Silver Williams (a total of 27).

All presentations were excellent. Brian Wills spoke on **“Monocacy”** and **“The War Hits Home.”** William Davis spoke on **“Love Among the Ruins”** and **“The Confederate Kardashian.”** Thomas Cartwright spoke on the **“Battle of Franklin”** and **“Battle of Brice's Cross Roads.”** James Stanbery spoke on **“The Rashomon of Spring Hill.”** Theodore Savas spoke on the **“CSS Arkansas and Vicksburg Campaign.”** Michael Oddenino spoke on the **“Battle of Balls Bluff.”** At the conclusion on Sunday, James Stanbery moderated a panel for the Conference using written questions from the audience to the speakers.

On Friday night, the Conference began with an excellent dinner and then an outstanding presentation by Ron Perisho, **“The Civil War in 3D.”** Also, James Stanbery and technician (Doug van der Weyde) supplied us with outstanding fireworks on their PowerPoint presentations. All were pleased.

The Jerry Russell Award was presented to William C. Davis for his support of the West Coast Conference and Civil War issues in general. A surprise for us was Paul G. Ruud also winning the Jerry Russell Award, two Awards at the same Conference.

The Conference was a complete success and the Sacramento CWRT is commended for their excellent work. Special recognition goes to Barbara Leone and Nicholas Scivoletto for their outstanding work on the Conference Raffle. Special recognition also goes to Michael L. Oddenino for his excellent work on the Conference Auction.

Looking ahead to 2018, the 34th Annual West Coast Civil War Conference will be hosted by the San Joaquin Valley CWRT. The topic is **“The Trans-Mississippi Theater: The Not So Glamorous Step-Sister of the Civil War”** and will be at the Wyndham Garden Fresno Airport Hotel in Fresno, CA. We hope to see you there.

## Ottalie Assing

Feminist, freethinker, abolitionist, writer, and free spirit, Ottalie Assing was born on February 11, 1819 in Hamburg, Germany. Her father, David Assur, a prominent physician from a wealthy orthodox Jewish family, changed his surname and converted to Christianity when he married the poet and teacher, Rosa Maria Varnhagen. Ottalie's parents were political radicals, active in European revolutionary circles. After their early deaths, Ottalie and her younger sister, Ludmilla, moved to Berlin to live with their uncle. The sisters had a contentious and competitive relationship throughout their lives. After living with her sister became unbearable, Ottalie emigrated to the United States in 1852, settling in New York City. She eked out a living as a translator for German magazines and newspapers. In 1856, after reading "*My Bondage and My Freedom*," by Frederick Douglass, she traveled to his home in Rochester, New York to propose a German translation of his work.



It was love at first sight for Ottalie. Douglass was 6'4", handsome, well-built, and charismatic, with a genius for the spoken and written word. By the following summer, Ottalie was ensconced in the Douglass home working on his book's translation. It was the first of twenty summers she would spend living with the Douglass family. It was not the first time Douglass had brought a woman into his home. The famous English abolitionist, Julia Griffiths, is believed to have had a sexual relationship with him while she lived with the Douglass family and helped Frederick start his newspaper, *The Northern Star*. She remained in the Douglass home until the scandal grew so widespread she had no choice but to return to England. Ottalie and Douglass seemed

to have made no secret of their affair. Anna Douglass finally confronted Ottalie, demanding that she leave. Ottalie refused, saying she would stay as long as Frederick wanted her.

In 1857, Assing moved to Hoboken, New Jersey. The City was the home of many displaced German intellectuals. It was also cheaper to live there than in New York. Hoboken, with its working class environment, was more accepting of interracial relationships and provided a place out of the public eye for the couple to meet. Ottalie sincerely believed that Frederick would soon leave his wife who he often referred to as "an old black log." But Ottalie underestimated his loyalty.

Anna was a free woman of color, born to emancipated slaves. She was seven years older than Douglass, had much darker skin and remained uneducated. Most of her life, she had worked as a laundress and cleaning woman. She was the one who had saved the money for Douglass' escape from slavery, bought the train ticket, had even sewn him the sailor costume he escaped in. She was the one who supported the family and kept them fed in Douglass' early days as a speaker and writer. Anna rebuilt their home after it was burned down by Klansmen. While Frederick was busy, Anna raised their children and buried one, always out of the spotlight. Guests to the Douglass home often treated Anna as a servant, feeling she was undeserving of the great man's love and nowhere near his intellectual equal. Frederick Douglass had become one of the most famous Afro-Americans in the world. He had a widespread European following, thanks to Ottalie's promoting him in her writings.

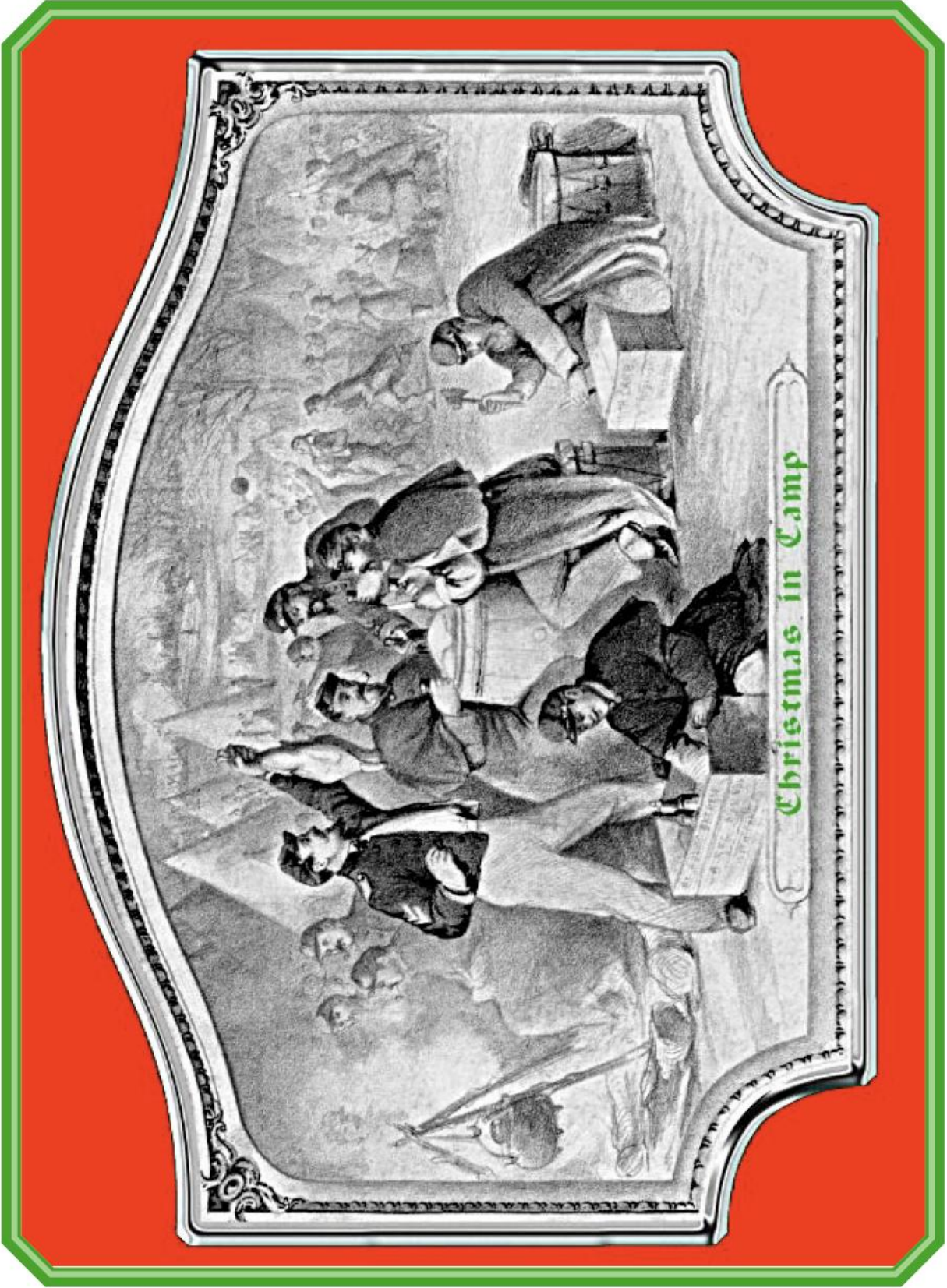
By 1876, Douglass' interest in Ottalie had waned. Ottalie went to Europe, hoping he would follow. Douglass went on with his life although they continued their weekly correspondence.

Ottalie's sister, Ludmilla, had moved to Italy to marry in 1861. The marriage was short-lived but Ludmilla remained there until her death in the San Bonifazio insane asylum in Florence on March 25, 1880. Although the sisters had never gotten along, her death came as a grave shock to Ottalie. Alone in Paris, no family left, Ottalie was diagnosed with breast cancer. She was convinced it was incurable.

Anna Douglass, ill for many years, died of a stroke on August 4, 1882. Eighteen months later, on January 24, 1884, Frederick Douglass married his next door neighbor, Helen Pitt, a white woman twenty years younger than him. She was the direct descendant of Priscilla and John Alden and cousin to John and John Quincy Adams. Helen had worked as Frederick's secretary while he wrote his autobiography, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*. Both of their families vigorously opposed the match.

On August 21, 1884, Ottalie walked to a secluded bench in the Bois de Boulogne. Once there, she uncorked a vial of poison and drank it. Her body was taken to the morgue where she remained unidentified for weeks. Ottalie's attorney learned of her death and retrieved her remains shortly before she was slated for dissection by medical students. Her attorney had her buried in the Cimetiere de la Morgue in Ivry, France, in an unmarked grave. Ottalie's will requested that her letters to Douglass be burned. She bequeathed her small fortune of \$13,000 to Douglass. It was doled out in six month intervals until it was gone.

Submitted by Judith Breistein



Christmas in Camp