



SONS OF UNION VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR
General Pleasonton CAMP 24

MINUTES OF CAMP MEETING April 18, 2017
Held at the Albany City Library

Meeting was called to order by Commander Ken Felton at 7:00 pm

Members in attendance: Brothers Ken Felton, John Gee, Jeffrey Vaillant, Dale Smith, Robert Mayer, Steve Johnson, Charlie Mabie

Treasurer's Report: Brother Johnson reported that as of March 31st, the camp has \$674.08, \$200 of which is in the Braden Schall Memorial Fund
Minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved.

Discussion items:

- Ken Felton gave a report about the Department encampment in March
- It was reported that the Living History Day in March on Alcatraz was successful
- Members Robert Mayer and Ken Felton said they would attend the Roaring Camp Living History Day at Felton May 27-29
- Members were invited to participate in 4th of July activities in Redwood City, Martinez, or San Jose
- General Order #19 was read and discussed

Thanks to the efforts of Brother Gee, we had a guest speaker who was Shelly Monson, a historian of the Victorian period and an actor for many years at the Dickens Victorian Christmas Fair held every year in San Francisco. She was invited to speak about Victorian mourning and funerary customs which, of course, were unfortunately quite prevalent during the Civil War. Among her revelations:

- People in the early 19th century were very familiar with death because of disease, childbirth mortality, poor medical care
- Homes were decorated with "memento mori": prints, locks of hair, stuffed pets
- Mourning clothes were codified: color of suits, dresses, and hats had to be black and worn for a proscribed period of time (for women, 1 year; for men 6 months)
- Wives were expected to mourn for a year before re-marrying; men could re-marry at any time
- Jewelry, handkerchiefs, shoes, fans, etc. also had to express mourning with black borders or crepe
- Widows were expected to stay at home and mourn and not attend festive occasions, while widowers could go back to work
- "Burial & Friendly Societies" sprang up which, for a small monthly fee, would cover the costs of a funeral and a mourning wardrobe

The camp thanked Shelly for her excellent presentation by taking her to dinner afterward. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Johnson, Camp 24 Secretary/Treasurer