



NEWS RELEASE

Jeff Sharp: (714) 614-1269

www.marchingthruhistory.com ↗

"MARCHING THROUGH HISTORY," ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST EDUCATIONAL TRIBUTES TO AMERICA'S MILITARY HEROES AND ONE OF A SELECT FEW THAT HIGHLIGHTS EARLY CALIFORNIA HISTORY, COMES TO PRADO REGIONAL PARK

The Oct. 3-4 event features artillery demonstrations, exhibits and 750 historical re-enactors, historians and military veterans who make history come to life for children and families across Southern California

CHINO, Calif., May 5, 2009 — Imagine, for a moment, what it would be like to meet George Washington during the height of the Revolutionary War, a man so courageous and committed to freedom that he came away from one battle with 4 bullet holes in his coat.

Or think what it would be like to talk to General Stephen Watts Kearny, the "Father of the future U.S. Cavalry," whose military expeditions helped build forts, map and expand U.S. territory by more than a million square miles before becoming the first military governor of New Mexico, California and, for a short time, Mexico itself.

Or ponder catching a glimpse of Abraham Lincoln, hearing the startling explosions from a vintage Civil War era cannons or the gunfights of a Wild West frontier town.

These are just a few of the experiences that will unfold before the eyes of Southern Californians Oct. 3 and 4 during the Marching through History Exposition at Prado Regional Park. The educational event, one of the largest of its kind in the nation, is unique in that offers a detailed portrayal of important chapters in early California history.

The educational event, which is organized by AMVETS Post 18 and supported by numerous veterans and historical clubs across Southern California, is provided as a free community service. However, the San Bernardino County charges \$7 per vehicle for access to the park.

"We expect more than 10,000 residents from across Southern California to attend," said Jeff Sharp - Director of Marching Thru History the coordinator of the event, which has been held annually in various locations in California since 1998 and is in its fifth year at Prado Regional Park.

The event, which includes more than \$60 million worth of historical artillery, movie props and authentic historical displays, features hundreds of historical re-enactors, including Don Moran, who portrays Major Caleb Gibbs, the commander of the elite troops who protected George Washington.

Moran, an editor of Revolutionary War newsletters and secretary of the Sons of Liberty Chapter, Sons of the American Revolution, will be joined by dozens of soldiers who will set up an exact replica of Washington's encampment. They will be dressed in period uniforms and armed with .69-caliber Charlevilles, a French made musket that included a 58-inch barrel as well as an 18-inch bayonet.

"Anybody who wanders into the camp will be stepping into an American Revolutionary War encampment," Moran said. "They'll be able to see the equipment and discuss any questions they have about the events that took place during the Revolutionary War."

They may even catch a glimpse of George Washington himself, a man historians regard as one of the most fearless leaders in American history. "When the Army was advancing," Moran said, "Washington was in front. And when it was retreating, he was the last man. He was an extraordinarily brave individual."

Washington, in fact, was so respected in battle that when in 1798 President John Adams appointed him Commander-in-Chief of American Armed Forces in 1798, the pending war with France was avoided by his reputation alone, Moran said.

Other historical re-enactors include Steve Clugston. An expert in early California history, Clugston portrays Gen. Kearny, who led American troops in battles against the native Californios in Southern California. Troops will include the U.S. Marines from the USS Savannah and the "Mormon Battalion" volunteers from the Fort Moore Garrison.

"We will be setting up a camp as it looked in California in 1846 and 1847," said Clugston, who in his role as Gen. Kearny will don a navy blue uniform and a 40-inch steel saber. Clugston's exhibit will also include live demonstrations of a 19th century mountain howitzer, an artillery cannon, plus illustrated displays of the five battles fought on California soil.

The Marching Thru History Exposition also includes several exhibits without a military theme as well, including a Western frontier border town and civilian impressions from both the Old World and the new.

Moran, and Clugston said all of the participants in the Marching Thru History Exposition take great pride in the historical accuracy of their exhibits as well as the interactive nature of the event, which encourages historical discussions with the characters. Certificates, in fact, are awarded to visitors' young and old who visit all 14 stations.

"I've had parents come up and shake my hand and say, 'This is something everybody should do,'" said Sharp of MTHE, adding, "You can learn more in an afternoon here than you do reading a stack of history books."

Clugston added, "A lot of people know about the history of the East Coast and the Civil War. But not many know much about the history of the United States west of the Mississippi. We try to educate them as much as we can."

There is also a Junior ROTC Color Guard Competition on 3 October that features students and schools from all over Southern California. Long Beach Poly JROTC lead by 1SG Johnny Byrum USA (Ret.) is the host school for this portion of the event.

The two-day educational event will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 3 and 4 at Prado Regional Park, which is located in Chino in San Bernardino County. Food vendors will be on site for attendees spending the whole day at the event.

To reach the park from Orange County, take Highway 91 east and then head north on Highway 71, which intersects with Highway 83 (Euclid Avenue). Continue north on Highway 83 and follow the Prado Regional Park signs. From Riverside or San Bernardino, take the 91 Freeway west and then take Highway 71 north, following the same directions outlined above.

For more information please go to www.marchingthruhistory.com