



Three Rivers Historical Times



Jan / Feb 2013

1903 A New Army Captain Is In Town!

The following article was written by William Tweed, now retired from the National Park Service and living in Three Rivers. In addition to this article we have three of Bill's books for sale in our Museum gift shop; 'Kaweah Remembered,' 'General Sherman Tree' and 'Uncertain Path'. This is a story about the early years of Sequoia National Park and Captain Charles Young.

When the new military superintendent for the summer of 1903 arrived in Sequoia National Park he had already faced many challenges. Born in Kentucky during the Civil War, Charles Young had early set himself a course that took him to places where a black man was not often welcome. He was the first black to graduate from the white high school in Ripley, Ohio at the age of 16, and through competitive examination he won an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1884. He went on to graduate with his commission, only the third black man to do so. Later he would remark that the worst he could wish for an enemy would be to make him a black man and send him to West Point.

His military career progressed in the cavalry, and he saw action in Cuba during the Spanish-American War. In 1903, he was serving as a captain in the Cavalry commanding a segregated black company at the Presidio of San Francisco when he received to take his troops to Sequoia National Park for the summer.



Captain Young is 5th from left, front row

In May, 1903, Sequoia National Park was already thirteen years old but still under-developed and hard to visit. Since 1891, the management and development of the park had been the responsibility of the U.S. Army, but owing to a lack of Congressional funding almost nothing had been done. The biggest lack in the park was an adequate wagon road to the Giant Forest, the home of the world's largest trees. Army work on a road had begun in the summer of 1900, but progress had lagged. In three summers barely five miles of road had been constructed.

Army administration of the early national parks usually took the form of a military officer sent to the park for the summer and authorized by the Department of the Interior to function as "Acting Superintendent." These assignments usually changed each year, part of the reason Army accomplishments in the parks are so limited. In its first

dozen years, Sequoia National Park never had a military superintendent who worked in the park more than two consecutive seasons. Young and his troopers arrived in Sequoia after a 16-day ride to find that their major assignment would be the extension of the wagon road. Hoping to break the sluggish pattern of previous military administrations, Young poured his considerable energies into the project, and dirt and rock began to fly. By mid-August wagons were entering the mountain-top forest for the first time. Still not content, Young kept his crews working and soon extended the road to the base of the famous Moro Rock. During the summer of 1903, Young and his troops built as much road as the combined results of the three previous summers. Young only served in Sequoia National Park for one summer. In 1904 he was posted as military attaché in Haiti. In 1904 the first civilian superintendent for Sequoia National Park, Walter Fry, was appointed. Later to become district judge and the grandfather to Jessie Bequette.

President's Corner

June 1, 2013 is an important date for the Museum because we are going to have a silent auction. It has been 3 years since we put on a silent auction and we need your help.

We have already received a few donated items but need more to make the event successful. Items of interest would be art works, antiques, small furniture items in good shape, gift certificates, gift baskets and a car. Yes, I said a car; new, used or antique car in very good condition.

The items of the silent auction can be viewed and bid upon while touring the museum's most recent purchase, the Bequette house located next to the Museum. It is one of the historic homes of Three Rivers built in 1926. This fund raiser is so important to the restoration progress we are doing on the house..

So look through your house, in your garage and if you're having a yard sale or moving sale think about donating some of those items to the Museum. We will be making up gift baskets also. We would be happy to pick up items from you if you're not able to get them to the Museum. Just give us a call 561-2707

Artifact of the Month

Each month we will feature an artifact from our Museum on our Facebook page

The following items were generously donated to the Three Rivers Historical Society by the descendants of Judge Walter Fry, and are waiting to be placed in the "Bequette House" located next door to, and recently purchased by, the Museum. The house was previously owned by Jessie and Bruce Bequette. Jessie Bequette was the granddaughter of Judge Walter Fry, the first civilian Sequoia Park Superintendent.

Once the inside of the house is restored, these items and more yet to come, will be placed in the Bequette house where Jessie treasured them.



- ◆ A fold-down-top desk belonging to Judge Fry's daughter, Bessie Fry McKinnon Weckert. Inside the desk are both the ink well and blotter Bessie often used.
- ◆ A Barrister's bookcase belonging to Judge Fry.
- ◆ A treadle Singer sewing machine previously used by Judge Fry's grand-daughter, Edith McKinnon Perry, including many accessories and bobbins.
- ◆ A swan pin cushion, a favorite of Bessie Weckert.
- ◆ A knick-knack shelf with glass back belonging to Jessie Bequette.
- ◆ A lamp owned by Bessie Fry Weckert, Jessie's mother
- ◆ An old 1930's light bulb that still works.



We've Got Mail!



We receive comments from members with every issue of the Historical Times, so we decided to let you know what people are saying. We encourage you to let us know 'good or bad', how we are doing.

From: Marsha Robbins

I received the email newsletter from you today and enjoyed reading about Jessie Bequette. She was my grandmother's close friend (Norma Ellis 1900-1983) and I have several children's books that were given to me by Jessie when I was a very young girl. My grandfather, Legrand Ellis, gave me the office chair that belonged to Walter Fry when he was superintendent of the Park. The chair was a gift from Judge Fry to my grandfather. I was in your museum the day after Thanksgiving and found an 8X10 picture of my mother, Mary Ellis Bronzan, as a young girl in Three Rivers. Keep up the good work.... Three Rivers is close in my heart.

The Wild Persimmons of Three Rivers

Michael Wall, former curator at Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden and part time Three Rivers resident, is researching the distribution and history of this beautiful and interesting tree. Native to eastern and south-eastern U.S., the wild persimmon was likely introduced by pioneering Three Rivers families. Do you have trees on your property or maybe even have records of family members or previous owners who might have brought and planted these trees on your property? If so, Michael would be keenly interested in hearing from you. This information from Michael's research will eventually be published locally and contain interesting historical information documenting the plants brought into our area. You can contact Michael at: yosemite.family@verizon.net. Or by phone at: (951) 663-1167



How About A New 'Old Family Recipe'

TANGY MARINADE FOR PORK CHOPS OR CHICKEN

I found this on the internet and modified the original a bit.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp. soy sauce
- 2 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire
- 1/4 tsp. lemon juice
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 2 tsp ketchup
- 2 thick pork chops or chicken

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees
 In a small bowl, thoroughly blend all wet ingredients.
 Place port chops or chicken in a medium baking dish, and spread with 1/2 the sauce.
 Bake pork chops 30 minutes in the preheated oven. Turn and spread with remaining sauce. Continue baking 30 minutes or until internal temp of the chops has reached 160 degrees F (70 degrees C).
 Bake chicken 15 minutes, then turn over and spread remaining sauce and bake 15 minutes.

Goes well with salmon too but delete ketchup

Bone-app-a-teeth.....
 Tom Marshall

ADDITIONAL DONATIONS IN 2012

Individual Donations

James E Yates & Maxine Yates-Poutsma
 Colin & Sylvia Coombs / Jeffrey & Wendy Dahlgren
 Chandler & Elizabeth Wilcox / Donald A. Peter
 Kathleen & James Seligman / Van Bailey
 James & Jeanette Barton / Sequoia Motel
 Helene & Thomas Keter / Sharon Devol
 Manuel Andrade / Juanita Tolle
 Janine Chilcott / Jack & Joyce Nielsen
 L.A. Lowther / Bank of the Sierra
 Valley Oak Credit Union / Peter Sodhy
 Louis & Marjorie Seeberger
 Marshall & Mary Ellen Waller
 Nancy Glass / Anne & Mitchel Styles
 American Ambulance of Visalia
 T. Bird & C.B. Hartman / Carol N. McGrew
 Shirley A. Lea Trustee In memory of Helen Grossman
 Gerald & Roselyn Avants / Donald A Peter
 Susan J. Darsey / Michael D. Little
 Robert Burke / William Haxton
 Louise Jackson / Betty Luciegh
 Jay O'Connell / Dalan Smith
 Mark Tilchen /Gwendolyn M. Warner
 Isabelle Collins / Schatzi & George Lovett

Monthly Donations

Rachel Caggiano
 Tom & Dody Marshall
 Three Rivers Lion's Club

Donations Over \$1000.00

Rusty & Pat Crain
 Michael Little
 Chan & Elizabeth Wilcox
 Three Rivers Ambulance fund
 Bank of the Sierra, grant
 Estate of Jean Darsey
 Woman's Club of Three Rivers
 Anonymous Donor

2013 Historical Society & Museum Events

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| MAR 2013 | 23 3pm-6pm | Author's Reception & Book Signing |
| APRIL 2013 | 1 | Change to summer hours. Open daily 9am-5pm |
| APRIL 2013 | 11-14, Thurs-Sun 9am-5pm | JAZZAFFAIR Memorabilia on display |
| APRIL 2013 | 25-28, Thurs-Sun | Lions Team Roping Museum acts as visitors center at the arena |
| MAY 2013 | 11-12, Sat-Sun 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm, Sun | Redbud Arts/Crafts Festival Museum will have a booth at Lions Arena |
| JUN | 1st weekend hours TBA | Silent Auction and VERY SPEICAL EVENT |
| JULY 2013 | 13, Sat, 10am-4pm | Hot Dog Festival at Museum Supporting the Three Rivers Vol. Firefighters & Museum. |
| SEP 2013 | 25-26, | California Student Indian Day Native-Americans will instruct 4th grade students on Indian life. Last year about 300 students went through the program. |
| OCT 2013 | 5, Sat, 10am-4pm | Living History Day Exploring early Three Rivers from the viewpoint of the residents. <i>Very different</i> |
| NOV 2013 | 16, Sat, 9am-5pm | Senior League Holiday Bazaar at Memorial Building Museum will have a booth. |
| NOV & DEC 2013 | Nov 17 through Dec 31 | Holiday Gift Shop time at the Museum. |
| DEC | 7, Sat, 10am-3pm 7, Sat, 5pm-7pm | 1st Saturday, Three Rivers Community Caroling at the Museum |

Visitor Count At The Museum

| YEAR | JAN | FEB | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Year 2010 | 379 | 764 | 848 | 902 | 922 | 1002 | 947 | 767 | 431 | 317 | 198 | 198 |
| Year 2011 | 199 | 206 | 375 | 870 | 889 | 856 | 835 | 975 | 676 | 966 | 306 | 177 |
| Year 2012 | 256 | 230 | 499 | 824 | 686 | 751 | 862 | 737 | 873 | 460 | 334 | 299 |

We're on Facebook!!



Like us on Facebook at [facebook.com/3rmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/3rmuseum), it's a great way to stay connected with the Museum and see our latest events and news. We also have exclusive photos you may not see anywhere else, so come check out our page and see what's new.



THREE RIVERS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Three Rivers Historical
Society & Museum**

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**Here's your
January-
February
2013
Newsletter**

Three Rivers Historical Times

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THESE FOLKS DONATED ITEMS IN 2012

Pat & Rusty Crain
Meryl Darsey
Linda & Roger Drouet
Jay Edwards
Descendants of Walter Fry
Michael Garcia
Roberta Harris
Dorletta & Rex Hildebrand
Patti Hilton
Jack & Joyce Nielsen
Diana Poole
Norma Posson
Ginny Stone
Susann Collette Stovall
US Post Office, Three Rivers
Mike Watkins
Chan & Elizabeth Wilcox
Mary & Paul Willmore

WHEN IS THE MUSEUM OPEN?

WINTER HOURS: Now through March 2013
Monday—Saturday, 9am to 3pm
Sunday— Closed

SUMMER HOURS: April through September 2013
Daily— 9am to 5pm

SPECIAL HOURS:
If you have a family gathering or group in
Three Rivers let us know and we would be
happy to open the museum for a special
occasion.

**How about donating
a silent auction item!**