



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

San Diego Public Library

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SAN DIEGO CENTRAL LIBRARY HOSTS TRAVELING EXHIBITION: CIVIL WAR 150

Exhibit Explores the Civil War and Its Meaning through the Words of Those Who Lived it

San Diego, CA... The San Diego Public Library will host *Civil War 150*, a national traveling exhibit, on display from February 9 to March 3 on the 2nd floor of the San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common, located at 330 Park Blvd in downtown San Diego. After long-simmering sectional tensions led to seven slaveholding states seceding, the ensuing political strife gave way to war in April 1861. Four years of fighting resulted in 1.5 million casualties, making the Civil War the bloodiest conflict in US history. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

By virtue of letters, personal accounts and images, learn how people grappled with the end of slavery, the nature of democracy and citizenship, the human toll of civil war and the role of a president in wartime. The San Diego Public Library is one of fifty sites nationwide selected to host the Civil War 150 exhibition.

“We are pleased to be selected,” said library director Misty Jones. “Through reproductions of documents, photographs and posters, the exhibition invites visitors to learn about events that took place during the war through the eyes of individuals. Though the Civil War took place 150 years ago, people today can still identify with the thoughts and fears of ordinary citizens and soldiers.” The following free programs are sponsored in conjunction with the exhibit:

- **War is All Hell: The Destructive Force of the American Civil War**
Monday, February 9, 6:30 p.m., 1st Floor - Mary Hollis Clark Conference Center
Professor Edward Blum of the History Department at SDSU discusses the social, economic, and human costs of the American Civil War. When William Tecumseh Sherman described the Civil War as "all hell," he was not only discussing the massive destruction of landscape, buildings, materials, animals, and people. He was also invoking radical evil in a way that mirrored many other Americans of the Civil War era. Dr. Blum's discussion will examine not only how radical evil haunted Americans of the Civil War, but also how Americans put radical evil to work for their political, racial, social, and military agendas.

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- **Freedomtown: The Founding of Allensworth, California**
Wednesday, February 11, 6:30 p.m., 8th Floor - Price Reading Room
Members of the Friends of Allensworth, San Diego Chapter, relate the story of Civil War veteran Colonel Allen Allensworth and the all-Black town he founded in 1908 in the San Joaquin Valley and where African Americans could freely own property and live the American Dream.
- **De Florida a Coahuila: The History of the Black Seminoles**
Monday, February 23, 6:30 p.m. – 1st Floor, Auditorium
This film tells a little known story of the US/Mexico border. It traces the history of the Mascogos, Afro-Mexican descendants of the Black Seminoles, who fled slavery and migrated to Mexico in search of freedom.
- **More than History and Dates: Black Civil War Re-enactors Re-enact Freedom**
Monday, March 2, 6:30 p.m., 9th Floor - Shiley Special Events Suite
Professor Patricia Davis of Georgia State University explores the little known world of African American Civil War re-enactors. Unheard of 50 years ago during the Civil War centennial, the story of Black re-enactors has emerged in the past 20 years thanks to new scholarship on Black Civil War troops, the 1989 movie “Glory” on the all black 54th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, and Ken Burns’ PBS documentary on the Civil War.

Developed by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in partnership with the Library of America, this exhibition was made possible through an NEH grant. The exhibition is part of “Civil War 150: Exploring the War and Its Meaning Through the Words of Those Who Lived It,” a major three-year project. The project is centered on the four-volume Library of America series *The Civil War Told by Those Who Lived It*. Visit the three institutions at the following websites respectively: www.gilderlehrman.org, www.loa.org and www.neh.gov.

Learn about other programs at the San Diego Public Library’s Central Library and 35 branches, find links to numerous additional resources, or search for materials in the Library’s catalog online at www.sandiegolibrary.org.

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