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28 September 2007

Rebecca Chodynieski  
Att: AMSTA-LC-LEAD  
MS - 419  
US Army TACOM - LCMC  
6501 East 11 Mile Road  
Warren Michigan 48397-5000

Subject: CA, Los Angeles Co., Long Beach, 42 lb. Seacoast Cannon

Greetings Rebecca,

Enclosed are pictures of the cannon, and a article concerning this gun. The pictures were taken by Floyd Farrar, SUVCW, in 2002 and he has not been back in a couple of years and does not know the current condition. He forwarded the article and pictures to me and I did not get to them till this evening as I had been out of town.

It looks like it is possible that this gun was moved from it's original display location to the Parker Light House Restaurant. We have often wondered how the gun ended up there. From the article it looks like the government loaned the gun for a specific display. My question is did the Army approve of the move to the current location? If not your Unit might wish to review the situation, especially since ownership is in question.

We of course would like to see the gun back by the Lincoln Memorial where it was originally.

The gun is heavily painted and the following information is taken from Wayne Stark's list of Surviving Civil War Cannons sent to me in May 2002: Long Beach, 42-pdr sc gun M1831, Foundry Columbia, Reg #63, Inspector JWR, Year 39, Weight \*8595 (\*= Weight confirmed from contemporary documents), banded, Parker Light House Restaurant. No Foundry # given in this information.

We are attempting to obtain some more historical article information and any new information will be forwarded as it becomes available.

Respectfully,

Kirby R. Morgan

CC: J. Sayer, D. Schall, D. E. McGovern, K. P. Tucker, F. Farrar

## Civil War relic needs a new home

Tom Hennessy, Staff columnist  
Long Beach Press Telegram  
Sept 22, 2007

The Civil War had been over for 50 years, but still lived on fiercely in the minds of those who had lived through it.

Across the nation, virtually every town had a relic from the conflict, a piece of yesteryear that said, "We lived through that time. We worried about the outcome. We gave our sons, brothers and fathers to it, and some of them sleep today in places not known to us when the battles began."

In some towns, statues helped us remember, likenesses of heroes who gave their all. In others, there were cannonballs, useless projectiles now arrayed on town squares. Still other municipalities recalled the war by displaying its artillery; guns, howitzers and short, squat mortar pieces.

That ancient artillery stands today in thousands of places, city parks to villages, Maine to California.

Long Beach has one of them, known in artillery talk as a 7-inch muzzle-loading rifle. Weighing about 9,500 pounds, it sits today next to a fence behind Parker's Lighthouse restaurant in Shoreline Village. Overlooking Long Beach Harbor, it seems to be waiting for an enemy unlikely ever to come.

Nor could the cannon do anything if an enemy did come. When the city acquired it from the Benicia Arsenal in the Bay Area, it came with a federal caveat that the weapon, which traced to 1840, was long past its shooting days and should not be fired.

### Historic year

The cannon arrived here in 1915, an illustrious year in the history of Long Beach. It was the year the Abraham Lincoln Park, with its Grand Army of the Republic monument, was dedicated on July 3. This is the park that now accommodates City Hall.

Later in the year, on Dec. 6, the cannon arrived, a gift from the federal government. Transportation from Benicia was provided by the Southern Pacific Railroad.

But precisely what happened after a stay in Lincoln Park depends on whom you ask. Long Beach activist Dave Denevan, something of an authority on the city's past, says the cannon at various times stood in Lincoln Park, in front of the Recreation Department, in a city property yard, and in Shoreline Village, where it is now.

Denevan says the cannon is protected by a loan agreement with the city. How and why it kept being moved is not entirely clear. What is clear, however, is that in the 1900's, various civil organizations began deciding that Lincoln Park was the prime location for the weapon after all.

By then, somehow, Denevan somehow became regarded as the weapon's guardian angel, or, in municipal speak, project coordinator. Organizations were writing to him, or to city officials, messages such as the following:



"The Historical Society of Long Beach urges you to use your influence in moving the Civil War cannon from Shoreline Village to Lincoln Park, where it can be displayed safely in an accessible, highly visible area in front of the Lincoln statue ..."

"Certainly, the agony of our Civil War deserves its place in history and the cannon ... belongs in Lincoln Park again." (Long Beach Sierra Club.)

"We are keenly interested in Long Beach's Civil War cannon and fully support Mr. David Denevan's efforts to have it relocated from Shoreline Village back to Lincoln Park, where it will again be safely displayed and will be accessible as part of a Civil War memorial." (Civil War Roundtable of Long Beach.)

### **Who owns it?**

In 1986, ownership of Shoreline Village changed hands. But for whatever reason, ownership of the cannon was not addressed in any of the papers relating to the sale. Thus, the question of who owns the weapon is unresolved. Denevan says it is the city, others say it is Shoreline Village.

Denevan, a veteran of the Vietnam War, believes Lincoln Park is the more desirable location for the cannon. He says it provides a greater honor to veterans, that it helps promote downtown, and that the change of location will make the cannon a popular landmark once again.

"As a veteran, I believe it is the right thing to do," says Denevan. "About 605,000 men died in the Civil War."

The current situation with the cannon was discussed briefly during Thursday's regular meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. While the commission discussed a letter from Denevan aiming to resolve the cannon question, nothing was resolved according to Dennis Eschen, manager of the planning and development bureau.

"We haven't contacted Shoreline Village yet to determine what their situation is," said Eschen, "and we don't really know what the cost of moving will be."

He added that there are seismic considerations, which also must be resolved.

Meanwhile, Denevan says he is willing to raise the money needed to move the cannon and to have it redisplayed in Lincoln Park. He also says he's given the commission a preliminary plan that addresses earthquake safety.

Tom Hennessy can be reached at [REDACTED] by e-mail at [REDACTED]



42lb Banded Seacoast Cannon  
M1831 *Circa 1839*  
@Parkers Lighthouse Restaurant  
Long Beach CA  
*looking south*

©Floyd Farrar  
7-24-2002