

## Stan Clardy Leads Celebration of Birth of Nation's Greatest Christian Military Leaders: Lee and Jackson

### Songwriter, Actor, Playwright, Musician and Author Presented: "Story Behind Songs"

The Lee – Jackson Dinner at the Airport Marriott, Saturday night, was musical and historical from beginning to end. Featured was a historic journey through the 1860s with Stan Clardy and his stories, songs and guitar along with the Joyful Harps featuring Heather and Raquelle Sheen.

The occasion was celebration of the birthdays of two of the nation's greatest military leaders who were graduates of the Military Academy at West Point who have a reputation for honor and patriotism "etched in stone," despite efforts of revisionists to distort their character.

When President Lincoln declared war on the South, Robert Edward Lee, who had been offered command of the entire Union Army, and Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson refused to go to war against their own families and neighbors. They honorably resigned their commissions in order to defend their beloved Virginia and the Confederacy. Their outstanding leadership qualities are used at military academies to this day as leadership examples to emulate.

Jackson was killed during the war probably as the result of accidental friendly fire, and Lee lived to surrender Confederate forces at Appomattox Court House in order to end the "total war" strategy employed by Union forces that included destruction and theft of private property and terrorism against Southern women, children, the elderly and infirm. Continuation of the war against a force bent on total destruction was hopeless.

Lee finished his life as president of Washington and Lee University. His ancestral home, the Custis – Lee Mansion, now called Arlington House and the surrounding plantation was confiscated by the Union and is now Arlington National Cemetery.

When President Eisenhower, who had commanded Allied Forces in the invasion of Europe and defeat of the Nazis in World War II, was asked why he had a picture of Robert E. Lee hanging in his White House office, he responded in a letter:

"General Robert E. Lee was, in my consideration, one of the

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supremely gifted man, produced by own nation. He believed unswervingly in the Constitutional validity of his cause which until 1865 was still an arguable question in America; he was thoughtful yet demanding of his officers and men, forbearing with captured enemies but ingenious, unrelenting and personally courageous in battle, and never disheartened by a reverse or obstacle.

"Through all his many trials, he remained selfless almost to a fault and unfailing in his belief in God. Taken all together, he was noble as a leader and as a man and unsullied as I read the pages of our history.

"From deep conviction, I simply say this: a nation of men of Lee's character would be unconquerable in spirit and soul. Indeed, to the degree that present-day American youth will strive to emulate his rare qualities, including the devotion to this land as revealed in his painstaking efforts to help heal the nation's wounds once the bitter struggle was over, we, in our own time of danger in a divided world, will be strengthened and our love of freedom sustained.

"Such are the reasons that I proudly display the picture of this great American on my office wall."

Stan Clardy, songwriter, musician, playwright, actor and author from Statesville, North Carolina, presented his musical program called "The Story Behind the Songs." It is a program mixed with originals and songs of the war period with interesting facts about the songs.

Stan and his wife Cathy, travel the south performing music and book programs for groups and festivals. They are involved in memorials and dedications throughout the South.

He has written and performed a one-man play, "Soldiers in Gray: A Musical Journey," about a soldier's life through the war based on facts and letters of that period.

Clardy said Americans are in danger of losing two things that are passed down from one generation to the next. They are faith and heritage.

"Sadly, a great many churches are eliminating these (traditional songs of faith) songs from their services and hymnals. Their reasons may vary but the result is the same. New generations are losing another piece of their religious heritage," Clardy said.

The true history of the South has been and is still being distorted and rewritten by revisionist historians and racial opportunists under the perverted guise of "civil rights."

During his musical presentation of "The Story Behind the Songs," Clardy talks about Nearer My God to The, one of the songs played by the band on the deck of the Titanic as the great ship went down. He said it is little known but there were Confederate veterans and other Southerners on the ship.

A young Jewish immigrant only 16 years old and too young to go into the Confederate Army in

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Georgia sold bonds for the Confederacy during the war to do his part for the defense of the South. With the war ended and imposed Reconstruction worse than the war in many ways, the bonds were worthless and those who bought them were desperately poor. The young Jewish merchant worked hard to build up his retail business and reimbursed each bond purchaser for their losses from his personal funds. He later moved to New York City with his brother and purchased a department store in 1893 that became profitable. His name was Isidor Straus.

Now quite wealthy and aging, the Jewish immigrant from Georgia decided to do something very nice for his wife. They sailed to Europe and booked luxury accommodations on the maiden voyage of the largest, safest and fastest ship the world had known. Passengers on the luxury VIP deck of the Titanic all had lifeboats. When the giant ship hit the iceberg and began sinking, lifeboats were lowered, Isidor Straus, an aging Southern gentleman with great wealth, escorted his wife to her seat on the lifeboat and declined to stay on the lifeboat himself, giving his seat to a woman passenger. As the lifeboat was about to cut loose from the ship, Mrs. Straus stepped back on the deck of the Titanic. She had decided to be with her husband to the end. "You may have heard the name of the store," Clardy said. It is still called Macys.

Soldiers in Gray is a one-man musical play written and performed by Stan Clardy. It is the story of a soldier's life before, during, and after the War Between the States 1861-1865. Any Southerner's ancestor could be the soldier. This is a fictional character whose story is based on written facts and personal letters of people who endured the fight for the South; starting with the thunder of the threatened South and ending with discovering a treasure – a heritage treasure.

"This educational, musical journey of a soldier's life and feelings during the war will encourage you to preserve and honor our Southern heritage for which these soldiers fought," Clardy stresses.

The Joyful Harps, a favorite musical group of those interested in historical and musical heritage played several tunes from their latest CD: Yesteryear on their twin Celtic harps.

They may be the first to record South Carolina's official State waltz: The Richardson Waltz. General Richard Richardson and his family moved to South Carolina from Virginia during the Colonial era and were one of the Palmetto State's founding families. The waltz was named for them and was passed down through the generations by ear for more than two centuries. It was written down in 1980 by a family member and is now the official State Waltz. It is believed that the Joyful Harps are the first to professionally record the waltz.

In addition to the Richardson Waltz, Yesteryear contains a collection of 17 "old fashioned music arranged for twin Celtic harps." The collection also includes two original tunes.

Yesteryear is an original composition by Heather Sheen, reflecting the many hours of storytelling she heard from her relatives. This song is dedicated to grandparents George and Joan Sheen.

Lee's Farewell, composed by Raquelle Sheen and dedicated to grandparents Dale and Shirley

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Roberts attempts to capture the poignant moment when Gen. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia in April 1865. Gen. Lee closed his farewell to his men with these words:  
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"You may take with you the satisfaction that proceeds from the consciousness of duty faithfully performed and I earnestly pray that a merciful God will extend to you his blessing and protection. With an unceasing admiration for your constancy and devotion to your country, and a grateful remembrance of your kind and generous consideration of myself, I bid you all an affectionate farewell."

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The Joyful Harps web site is [joyfulharps.com](http://joyfulharps.com). The email address is [joyfulharps@earthlink.net](mailto:joyfulharps@earthlink.net). Mailing address is PO Box 1484, Taylors, SC 29687

The Lee-Jackson Dinner was sponsored by the 16th Regiment, Camp 36, Sons of Confederate Veterans, PO Box 4173, Greenville, SC 29608 and the Museum and Library of Confederate History, 15 Boyce Avenue, Greenville, SC 29601.