

Loreta Janeta Velazquez (June 26, 1842 – 1923), masqueraded as a male Confederate soldier, Lt. Harry T. Buford, during the American Civil War. She recorded in her diary that she fought in the battles of Bull Run, Ball's Bluff, and Shiloh to name a few. The Confederates referred to her as a heroine. As a spy, she used both male and female disguises and in peace, she spied for the Union as a Secret Service Agent. Loreta's diary also records an opportunity to shoot Major General Ulysses S. Grant. She felt it would be murder and chose not to do it. Had she done it, the Appomattox surrender could have been tragically different and the loss of the 18<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S. Born in Havana, Cuba, she returned there in her last days as Loreta J. Beard.

About our Speaker:

Diane Dugan was a teacher and worked in Cosmetology prior to 2020. During her hiatus, while reading and writing, she discovered her gift for script writing which she attributes to her mother who was always reading and writing. Diane has a copyright on her bond script and presentation for "Women of the War," Velazquez's story.

Diane has participated in Wounded Warrior Projects and shared Loreta J. Velazquez' story to veterans at VFWs and civic groups. She is surprised how so many veterans' groups warmly receive her presentation and wonders if it is due to the number of female veterans present.