

The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

Capital District Civil War Round Table

P.O. Box 14871, Albany, NY 12212-4871

CDCWRT's web site: ***www.cdcwrt.org***

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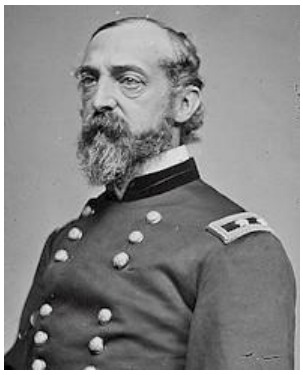
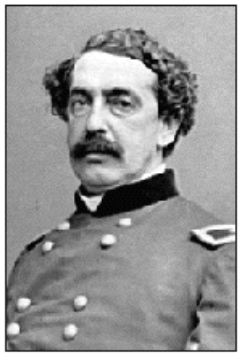
WANTED









Major General
Abner Doubleday
1819 - 1893

THESE UNION GENERALS ARE WANTED FOR CONSPIRACY TO COMMIT MYTH

From left to right, Major General George Gordon Meade, Major General Oliver Otis Howard, Major General Winfield Scott Hancock, Major General Abner Doubleday

MARCH MEETING

Friday March 10, 2006
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.

SOCIAL HOUR	**6;00-7:00PM**
BUSINESS MEET	**7:00-7:30PM**
PRESENTATIONS	**7:30-Dawn**
Q&A	**IF PRACTICABLE**

CDCWRT MEETING

The March meeting of the CDCWRT will be held in the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, March 10th, 2006 at 7:30pm. Our speaker will be Round Table member, J. J. Jennings, and his presentation is entitled, **"Hancock and the First Day at Gettysburg: Myth Versus Reality."**

The four Union Generals, depicted on the cover of this newsletter, namely Meade, Howard, Hancock and Doubleday, were responsible for creating and perpetuating one of the "Major" Myths about the First Day of the Battle of Gettysburg. The Round Table's own "Hancockaphile," **J. J. Jennings (say what *does* J. J. stand for),** ***will see if he can cut through the "Fog of War" and the "Fog of the Post-War," and determine what is the Truth and what is the Myth. He will speculate on how and why the myth came about, and why the myth has been perpetuated down to today.***

J. J. has been a member of the Round Table since 1998, and was recently elected to the Board as a Member-at-large. He is a retired Federal employee, and a Marine Corps veteran of Vietnam. After the military he attended SUNY College at Fredonia, graduating in 1975 with a B.A. degree in History. He is presently a part-time employee of the Thomas P. Mooney Funeral Home in Nassau, NY, and is an umpire with the Capital District Baseball Umpires Association.

His interest in the Civil War can be traced back to a summer trip with his mother and father to Gettysburg in 1962. He has developed an interest in Major-General Hancock gradually over the past several years, although his fiancée, Bernadette LaManna, has stated it now has become a full-blown magnificent obsession. Of course, J. J. is also a member of the Winfield Scott Hancock Society, which is headquartered in Norristown, PA, just outside of Philadelphia. Norristown is the home and final resting place of the General.

We will also repeat our **MAGAZINE EXCHANGE NIGHT** ***when the CDCWRT will sell old Civil War magazines for $0.25 apiece. There will also be a selection of used soft-cover and hardcover books for sale, in addition to CDCWRT baseball T-shirts and other gift items. Almost all of the magazines that were donated by Jon Olson, were sold. Two sets of "America's Civil War" are still available. We also have the Civil War Preservation Trust 2006 calendar on sale for $5.00 for RT members.***

PAST EVENTS

If William Seward had not tried to stop a runaway carriage, he very likely would have been with Lincoln at Ford's Theater on April 14, 1863. It is very likely he would have been mortally wounded, unlike the serious injury a young Major Rathbone received. Would the Alaska Purchase have ever occurred? A good crowd was on hand to hear Nancy Farina's presentation on Seward. Although he started out as a political opponent to Lincoln, the two men

became friends and political allies. There was enough interest expressed by the group to consider a day trip or a weekend trip to Seward's house in Auburn and sites in Rochester this coming spring.

BOARD MEETING

At the February Board Meeting it was announced that there was $2048.65 in the regular account, and $8353.60 in the preservation account. First Night in Saratoga at the Military Museum during a snowstorm netted $164 in sales. Thanks were expressed to Matt George, Rosemary Nichols and Mary Ellen Johnson for manning the tables. Matt George is also continuing his Civil War Soldier presentations in the area. The next will be at Parkland Gardens on Monday, February 27th. Sue Knost is putting together a proposed fall trip to Civil War Philadelphia on Columbus Day Weekend in October.

UP-COMING EVENTS

THERE WILL NOT BE A CDCWRT MEETING ON FRIDAY, APRIL 14TH. ALTHOUGH THE SECOND FRIDAY IS OUR USUAL MEETING NIGHT, THIS YEAR IT IS ALSO THE WEEKEND OF PASSOVER (13TH) AND GOOD FRIDAY (14TH.).

On Saturday, April 8th, the 10th Annual Full Duty Award Banquet will be hosted by the Vermont Civil War Council at the Capitol Plaza Hotel in Montpelier, VT. The guest speaker will be Michael Kauffman, author of "***American Brutu: John Wilkes Booth and the Lincoln Conspiracies."*** In past years, a number of our members have attended these banquets. The food is excellent, and there are Civil War sites to visit along the way, including Pleasant View Cemetery in Burlington. A number of members are driving to Vermont. The banquet is $25 per person and a block of rooms is available for $ per person, double occupancy. Please talk to Sue Knost ASAP if you want a room.

Kauffman, a political historian, has studied the Lincoln assassination for more than 30 years. He follows the personal history of the many characters whose names are associated with the assassination, from the lead-up to the attack, through the escape, the trial, and the hangings. His research has led him to conclusions that differ greatly from long-held popular beliefs. Among these are the following: Booth did not hurt his leg in the theater but during the escape on horseback; Mary Surratt was properly charged as a conspirator; Dr. Samuel Mudd was not properly charged. This promises to be a very interesting and entertaining evening.

THERE WILL BE A CDCWRT MEETING APRIL, FRIDAY 21ST AT THE GUILDERLAND LIBRARY. The speaker will be Kathy Sheehan, who will speak on the Civil War Women of Emma Willard School. This is the story of several Southern women who were attending school at Emma Willard when the war started. They were trapped in the north, and their letters tell the tale of their ordeal.

The May meeting of the CDCWRT will be held on Friday, May 12th at the Guilderland Library. Jim O'Dell will present, **"Civil War Trains."**

The June meeting of the CDCWRT will feature member, Ray Wemple. The topic is not yet available for publication.

June 10-11, Saturday and Sunday, mark the 14th Annual Peterboro Civil War Weekend in Peterboro on route 20 between Utica and Syracuse. There will be a soldiers' encampment, period entertainment and performances, Civil War music, and crafts. There will be walking tours of the Gerrit Smith National Historic Landmark and Heritage NY Underground Railroad sites. There will be a skirmish on Saturday and Sunday, and a Blue and Gray Ball Saturday night. Our RT and other groups have information tables at this event, and a special postal cancellation will be available. For more information go to **www.the12thus.com.**

June 24-25, Saturday and Sunday, marks the 10th Annual Civil War Encampment at Prospect Park, Troy, NY. This is hosted by the 77th NYVI. There will be skirmishes each day, including artillery. The CDCWRT and the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway Museum will have displays and a special postal cancellation. Breakfast is available both days and a dinner is available on Saturday. This event was previously held at the King Solomon Masonic Temple in Troy, but had outgrown the site. This is becoming a great local event that deserves our support.

July 1-3, Saturday – Monday, marks the 143rd Anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. These are the same dates as the original battle in 1863. The re-enactment is entitled, *High Tide of the Confederacy – Turning Point of the Civil War.* There will be battle scenarios every day, as well as walks on the battlefield with Park Service Rangers. This is a major event for the CDCWRT. Volunteers are needed. Plan ahead now, since rooms are very limited in motels for this event. Info is at www.gettysburgreenactment.com.

July 21-23, Friday-Sunday, also marks the 145th Anniversary cycle for the Civil War and the First Battle of Manassas (First Bull Run). The reenactment will be held at Cedar Creek Battlefield in Middletown, VA.

The weekend of July 28-30 marks the Induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame at Cooperstown, NY. The CDCWRT usually has tables for sale of postal cachets and other items at this event. Details will follow in later newsletters.

MISCELLANEOUS

On February 24th, the CWPT announced a major gift from the estate of historian and ardent preservationist, Brian C. Pohanka, who passed away in June 2005. In his will, Pohanka left CWPT a bequest totaling $1 million earmarked for land acquisition.

Pohanka's generosity to battlefield preservation was unequalled. In addition to the bequest, he and his wife, Cricket, quietly donated an equal amount to CWPT in 2004. In his will he also set aside money for the Central Virginia Battlegrounds Trust ($500,000), the Richmond Battlefields Association ($500,000), and the Save Historic Antietam Foundation ($200,000).

"Brian placed an immense value on the preservation of our Civil War battlefields, and to see the sites he so cared about, perpetually protected will be a fitting tribute to his life and his work."

Pohanka was frequently quoted as saying the inspiration for his tireless efforts was the idea that a century from now, a child might become as interested in the Civil War as Brian was in his own youth. That child, Pohanka often said, must still have the opportunity to visit our battlefields, our hallowed grounds, and absorb their lessons.

* * * * * *

Jon Olson will donate $25 to the RT if he could sell for $200 an unframed, Dale Gallon print entitled, **"Last Promise."** It depicts Brig. Gen. John Reynolds and Catherine May Hewitt entering into a secret engagement before he reports to the Army of the Potomac. Jon's phone is 785-1700.

THE FALL TRIP

For the past two years, we have canceled our October battlefield trips. The reasons have been complex and multiple. In the past, we have sponsored trips, which ranged from $269 to $575. This included ALL transportation, hotels, most meals, including a banquet, top guides, all entrance fees, and with enough left over to make a donation to a particular battlefield. All arrangements were made for members on the tour.

Fuel prices will now substantially raise the price for travel to distant destinations. At the February meeting, Program Chair, Sue Knost, spoke briefly about a trip to Philadelphia, to look at some Civil War locations of interest including museums and cemeteries. Some Revolutionary War sites may also be included. Details of the trip are still being finalized.

We would tour on Columbus Day weekend, leaving Friday, October 6th, and returning on Monday, October 9th. We would travel by Brown Bus Company, a known entity. The complete cost would be somewhere between $450-500, depending on a host of variable that may change between now and down deposits. A solid commitment of 25 is needed. Any more above 25 will make the price go DOWN since transportation is the biggest expense. A show of hands at the meeting indicated almost 20 who are seriously interested.

A non-refundable deposit will be required. If we do not have the necessary numbers and deposits by the deadline date (to be announced in the next newsletter), deposits will be refunded, and the trip scrubbed.

So you now know the place, date and estimated cost eight months in advance. You have at least a month to clear your calendar for October, and to start saving up for the trip. You know the quality of our trips. The ball is in your court.

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

His epitaph reads:

"I repose in this quiet and secluded spot / Not from any natural preference for solitude / But, finding other Cemeteries limited as to Race by Charter Rules / I have chosen this that I might illustrate in my death / The Principles which I advocated through a long life / EQUALITY OF MAN BEFORE HIS CREATOR."

Who was he?

Mail answers to Editor, and the earliest correct answer will win a prize.