

The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

Volume 24 Number 1 **September 2006**



September 17th marks the 144 anniversary of the Battle of Antietam. One of the most well-known map references is the Dunker Church, which was photographed by Gardner on September 19, 1862. Antietam has been called, "The bloodiest day in American history," "artillery hell," and "the soldiers' battle." While figures vary, careful analysis indicates 24,412 casualties ---KIA 3911, WIA 18,165 and MIA 2136. This amounted to 24% of the 53,632 men of the Army of the Potomac engaged, and 38% of the 30,646 men of the Army of Northern Virginia engaged. George McClellan missed the opportunity to end the war. Robert E. Lee extricated his army, and the War would continue two and one-half more years.

SEPTEMBER MEETING
Friday September 8, 2006
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.

SOCIAL HOUR	**6;00-7:00PM**
BUSINESS MEET	**7:00-7:30PM**
PRESENTATIONS	**7:30-8:30PM**
Q&A	**8:30-9:30PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The September meeting of the CDCWRT will be held in the Guilderland Public Library on Friday, September 8th, at 7:30pm. Our program will be one that we have tried to present several times in the past, but scheduling was problematic. Our guest speaker will be Kathy Sheehan of the Rensselaer Historical Society. Her topic is entitled, **"Letters from the North."**

When the Civil War broke out, there were several, young Southern women, who were students at Emma Willard's School for Girls. They were trapped in the North, although they wrote letters to their families in the South. Kathy will talk about their experiences, based on these letters. This should be an interesting perspective.

UP-COMING EVENTS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH, is the Irish Festival at the Altamont Fairgrounds. Volunteers are being sought to man the information and sales tables of the CDCWRT. Contact Sue Knost or Mike Spaulding.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD, is the Civil War Heritage Day at Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands. Details are to be found later in this newsletter.

The October meeting of the CDCWRT will be on FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13TH, at the Guilderland Library. The library will be sponsoring a series of lectures on World War II, similar to last year's series on World War I. Last year's well-attended meeting featured a member of the Military History Department at West Point. We hope to do the same for this year.

The Annual Gala for the HUDSON-MOHAWK INDUSTRIAL GATEWAY will be held on FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20TH. The Round Table has always supported the event, and last year members of the RT helped run the silent auction to raise funds. Volunteers for this very worthy event are needed. Please speak to Sue Knost, Mike Spaulding or Rosemary Nichols if you are interested in helping.

The November meeting of the CDCWRT will be on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH, VETERANS DAY. This will be our Fall Banquet. The Affair will probably be held at the Sovereign Hotel on Western Ave. in Albany. Our invited guest speaker is Cricket Bauer Pohanka. She and her late husband, Brian Pohanka, were very much involved in preservation activities. The Civil War world lost a true scholar and preservationist with his death last year. Cricket is very much involved with the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), and will present the national organization's Round Table of the Year Award to our group.

The New York State Military Museum will open its World War II exhibit that same day. Members of the RT are encouraged to attend the activities in Saratoga during the day, and come to banquet in the evening in Albany. This

would be a very appropriate way to celebrate Veteran's Day, and avoid the malls.

NOVEMBER 17TH TO 19TH, FRIDAY TO SUNDAY, IS REMEMBRANCE DAY WEEKEND IN GETTYSBURG. This marks the 143rd anniversary of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Since the anniversary of the battle this year was on the actual days of the week, the address will also be the same. This is a larger event than the battle days. Anyone interested in attending and wanting a room at the motel, should talk to Sue Knost as soon as possible.

The December meeting of the CDCWRT will be on Friday, December 8th. This will be our holiday party, and we will elect a new Board. Our special invited speaker will be none other than author, JEFF SHAARA!!!! The last time he was in the Capital District was shortly after his first book, ***Gods and Generals,*** had been published. Details will follow in subsequent newsletters.

BOARD MEETING

The Board Meeting was held on July 10th, 2006. The treasurer's report noted $2449.85 in the regular account, and $7808.65 in the preservation account. The treasurer noted that monies earned from cachet sales included $281 from Peterboro Civil War Days, $473 from the Troy Civil War Days, and $2889 from the 143rd anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg. A $50 donation was made by James D. Folts, Jr. for his friend, Bill Evans. Mr. Evans worked for the NPS at Gettysburg for forty years

It was also announced that donations honoring the marriage of J.J. and Bernadette Jennings, amounted to $995. The total will be donated for preservation activities yet to be determined.

The speaker at the June 9th meeting of the CDCWRT was very well received. Ron Soodalter spoke about Captain Gordon, who was the only American slave trader to be tried and hung. The outside temperature was very cold on June 10th and 11th, at the Peterboro Civil War Days. This kept crowds small. Threatening weather also kept crowds small at Troy's Civil War Days at Prospect Park on June 24th and 25th. Heavy rains also made the site of the 143rd anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg a quagmire. The re-enactment was cancelled for a week, but crowds of visitors did not find out until they arrived on July 1st. The CDCWRT was allowed to set up in the Cyclorama Building and the Visitor Center for the sale of postal cachets.

THE FALL TRIP

The Fall trip is scheduled from Friday, October 6th through Monday, October 9th, 2006. We have the minimum number to go with an expected cost of $549 per person (subject to change). If you want to join us on the bus, a non-refundable deposit of $100 is needed **NOW! If several more members join us, the cost will go DOWN! Stick that in your gas tank!**

MISCELLANEOUS

Our president, Matt George, has contracted that virulent infection, called **Frequentimus reenactimus.** Manifestations of this disease process include the wearing of old clothes and shoes, and the public display of one's self at various venues (exhibitionism).

He will be appearing as a Living History presentation at the Knox Historical Society, Tuesday September 26th at 7:30 pm; and at

the Mayfield School 8th grade class TBA; and at the NYS Historical Site at Schoharie Crossing on Sunday, January 7th, 2007.

Civil War at the Norman Rockwell Museum: Stockbridge, MA.
On view through October 29, 2006 is an exhibit entitled, ***"Frederic Remington and the American Civil War: A Ghost Story."***

At the dawn of American century, an Eastern artist, best known for his illustrations in the periodicals of the day, defined national values through his romanticized images of the cowboy on the American frontier. Like Stephan Crane, he listened to Civil War veterans as they spoke about their war experiences, and he studied images of the war. These encounters crept into a number of his artistic endeavors. Remington created powerful images that were accepted as the distillation of the best of the American character, conveying a sense of strong individualism and identity. If you like this exhibit, you should also visit the Frederic Remington Art Gallery in Ogdensburg, NY.

Nationally acclaimed military artist, Don Troiani, will be speaking and signing his newest book, *Don Troiani's American Battles: The art of the Nation at War, 1754-1865,* on Saturday, September 9, 2006, at the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs. The program will begin at 12:00 noon. Reenactors, refreshments, and period music will be part of the event.

His new book, which is available at the museum bookstore, is a panoramic tour of America's military past from the French and Indian War through the Civil War. The book includes scenes from the Battle of Saratoga. In fact, Troiani was commissioned to illustrate the large tablets on the Saratoga Battlefield. Ed Bearss tells the story that Troiani painted a British Black Horse Cavalry unit involved at Saratoga. He later discovered the black horses had died in route from England, and that the unit now had roans. Troiani was such a stickler for detail and accuracy, that he tried unsuccessfully to convince the Park Service to let him repaint the horses.

On Sunday, September 24, 2006, Ron Tunison, America's premier military sculptor, will talk at the NYS Military Museum. Ron will discuss the monuments he has created at the Gettysburg Battlefield. The program begins at noon.

LINCOLN MEN AND SONS OF DIXIE

We would like to continue this feature over the next year. If you have a brief biography of a Civil War relative, and would like to share it with the Round Table, please send it to the editor of *The Dispatch.* If you have a photo of the individual, we would include it with the article.

MILITARY HISTORY IN THE ADIRONDACKS

In late July Nancy and I spent a week in the Adirondacks around Lake Placid. We made several day trips, and I realized that with the fall foliage just a few weeks off, a very nice weekend could be spent sight-seeing and site-seeing. The region is rich in military history, especially the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War. However there are still some interesting Civil War connections.

At Lake Placid, just a few hundred feet from the base of the 90-meter Olympic ski jump is the home and burial site of John Brown. This is a NYS historical site. Brown lived at

the home from 1849 until his fateful trip to Harpers Ferry. Gerrit Smith, noted abolitionist and philanthropist, offered parcels of his vast landholding in the Adirondacks to free blacks, who wished to farm there. Brown moved to North Elba to assist these settlers. However the settlement known as "Timbucto" did not survive. After his trial and execution, Brown's body was brought back to his home site for burial. Eleven of his followers, including two sons, are buried at the family plot.

After leaving Lake Placid, it's a short drive to Port Henry, NY on Lake Champlain. This was a center for logging and later for iron ore. The whole story is told at the Iron Center, a very interesting small museum in a restored carriage house. The high-grade magnetite ore from the mountains around Port Henry was world famous. The Champlain Canal, opened in 1823, provided cheap water transport south to the Hudson River and the mills in Troy, NY. There it was made into nails, track, stoves, horseshoes and very likely, the plates for the Monitor. The mines finally shut down in the early 1970's.

After lunch it's a short drive to Crown Point Where there is a small memorial cemetery to the local veterans of many wars. There is a monument dedicated to a Civil War officer's horse, named Pink, who went through a litany of famous battles. The Civil War monument has an interesting battle listed on it. Along with Antietam, Gettysburg, and Petersburg, there is Coal Harbor (sic Cold Harbor).

Before crossing the bridge into Vermont, we stopped at Crown Point State Historic Site to tour the museum and the ruins of Fort St. Frederic and his Majesty's Fort at Crown Point. This was the British largest fortification in North America. It was captured by the American rebels in 1775, along with 114 pieces of artillery, 29 of which were eventually transferred to their forces in Boston by Col. Henry Knox.. The American withdrew in 1776. The following year General John Burgoyne occupied Crown Point, and it remained under British control until 1783.

If you continue further south on the New York side of the lake, you arrive at Fort Ticonderoga. On the grounds around the fort occurred the greatest French victory of the Seven Years' War (French and Indian War), namely the Battle of Carillon on July the 8th in 1758. The capture of the Fort by Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys along with Benedict Arnold, was the first American victory of the American Revolution. (Allen had better press since Arnold's name is rarely associated with the Fort.) There are living history activities every day including soldiers, fifers, and cooks.

But we crossed at Crown Point and the next day toured Hildene, the summer home of the Robert Todd Lincoln family. Many have toured this gem, but presently there is a very good Civil War soldier exhibit in the upstairs that tells the story of a local company of men who fought in the War.

The logical end of this tour would be the Burden Iron Works building in Troy, NY. It was here that the ore was made into horseshoes for the Union Army at the rate of a shoe per second at the Iron Works. It give you a glimpse of the industrial might of the North that helped assured its victory. This would make a nice two-day trip with an overnight stay in Crown Point or Manchester, VT. It traces the Civil War from its root causes with John Brown, to its end, with the last of the Lincoln line ending at Hildene.