

The Dispatch

Newspaper of the

CAPITAL DISTRICT CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

PO Box 14871 Albany, NY 12212
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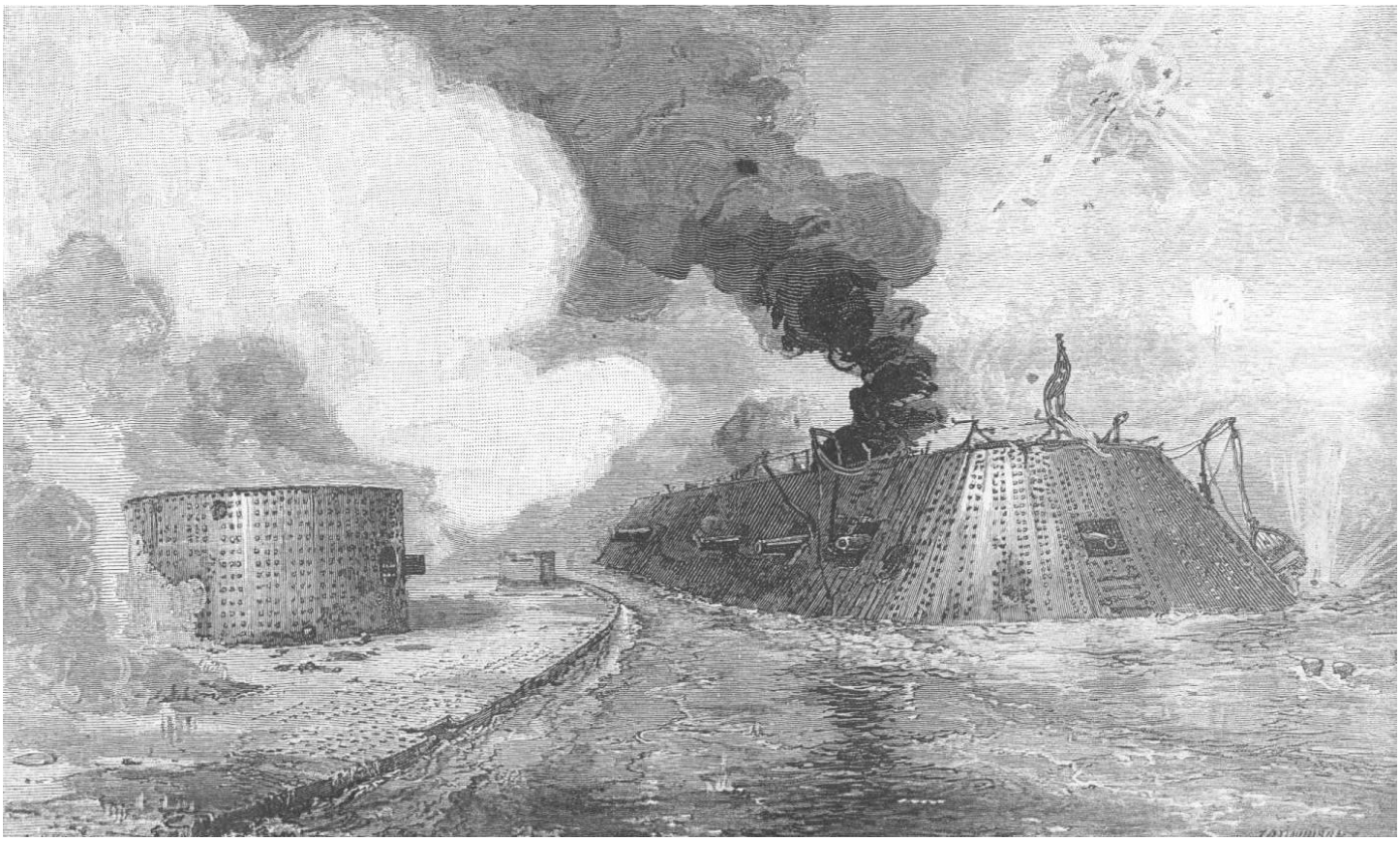
145TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF HAMPTON ROADS



On March 8, 1862 the ironclad CSS Virginia (the hull of the former Union warship, Merimac) steamed out into Hampton Roads and rammed and sank the USS Cumberland. On March 9th, as the Virginia headed toward the USS Minnesota, a small, experimental Yankee ironclad that looked like a "tin can tied to a shingle" came into view. For the next several hours the two vessels fought to an inconclusive stalemate. The battle however had changed the face of naval warfare and doomed wooden warships.

MONTHLY MEETING
FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2007
Guilderland Library
2228 Western Ave.

GENERAL MEETING

SOCIAL HOUR	**6:00-7:00 PM**
BUSINESS	**7:00-7:30 PM**
PRESENTATION	**7:30-8:30 PM**
DISCUSSION	**8:30 – 9:00 PM**

CDCWRT MEETING

The MONTHLY meeting of the CDCWRT will be held at the Guilderland Library on FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2007. March is the 145th anniversary of the naval battle between the Monitor and the Virginia, and it is only fitting that our speaker should cover some aspect of this history-making event. Our guest speaker will be Dr. P. Thomas Carroll, and his topic will be **"The Capital Region's role in the Story of the USS Monitor, and the Troy Monitor Replica."**

The plates and bracing for the Monitor were milled in the iron industries along the Hudson River in Troy. Earlier, the contracts were signed in local meeting rooms. Tom Carroll is the perfect speaker to talk about the ironclads, since his life the past 10 years has revolved around the Monitor. He is a leading proponent of the Monitor Replica Project for Troy.

Tom is an American cultural historian who specializes in the history of American science and technology. He was a graduate of Caltech, and received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Later he was Associate Professor of History at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute from 1989 to 1996. In 1997 he became Executive Director of the Hudson Mohawk Industrial Gateway, a position he presently holds. Tom has published on topics ranging from Charles Darwin, to the history of solid propellant rocketry, to the history of American chemistry. He has been a Mellon Fellow at the Library of the American Philosophical Society and an Exxon Research Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Burden Ironworks Museum has been under his supervision. It was at the Ironworks where most of the horseshoes for the Union Army were made, and it was here that the plates for the Monitor were milled. If you have never been to the Burden Ironworks Museum in Troy, you are missing one of the most fascinating museums in the state, especially if you are interested in the Civil War. Do it!!

MONTHLY MEETING

Last month a crowd of about 60 people heard Chris Morton talk about the NYS Battle Flag Preservation Project, with particular emphasis on the 77th NYSVI from Saratoga County. If you are interested in preservation in general terms, look at up-coming events for the annual Peebles Island open house. The NYS preservation labs are open to the public on this Saturday in May.

BOARD MEETING

Very appropriately, the February Board Meeting was held on February 12th, Lincoln's birthday. Our treasurer announced that there was $1671.24 in the regular account and $9471.82 in the preservation account. The RT collected $956 from the Cover Show by the sale of T-shirts, books, and postal items. Donations to the RT in celebration of Rosemary Nichols **60th** birthday amounted to $511. The Board approved a $500 donation to The Civil War Preservation Trust for Bentonville Battlefield. This was a 10:1 match that was leveraged to $5000.

UP-COMING EVENTS

On Friday, April 13th, the guest speaker for the CDCWRT meeting will be author, Bill Christen. He will talk about the Union spy, Pauline Cushman. Interestingly, she was on tour in upstate New York in the spring of 1865, and was in Syracuse on April 13, 1865. Her appearance was cur short by the assassination of Lincoln.

The May meeting of the CDCWRT will be on Friday, May 11th. May marks the 400th Anniversary of the founding of the Jamestown Colony in Virginia. Queen Elizabeth II is expected to attend the celebration in Virginia. Our guest speaker from the Baltimore Postal Service will discuss the commemorative postal stamp that will be issued for the event.

On Saturday, May 19th, the annual open house of the NYS preservation facilities at Peebles Island will occur. The island is located near the mouths of the Mohawk River, at the site of a historic ford during colonial times. One can view the remains of cannon emplacements that were built to defend the ford from capture by the British just before the Battle of Saratoga.

On Friday, June 8th, guest speaker Patrick Schroeder will talk about Appomattox Court House at the CDCWRT meeting.

The 15th Annual Peterboro Civil War Weekend will take place on Saturday and Sunday, June 9th and 10th. Peterboro is located on route 20 between Utica and Syracuse. The event sponsors skirmishes, period entertainment, music, crafts, medical scenarios, and a Blue and Gray Ball. The town is the site of the Gerritt Smith National Historical Landmark, which was part of the Underground Railroad. There will be tours each day. The CDCWRT staffs an information booth and sponsors a postal cancellation.

Unfortunately, the Troy Annual Civil War Encampment WILL NOT take place this year. Our understanding is that no one stepped forward to organize the event. Previous events were sponsored at the King Solomon Masonic Temple, but the event outgrew that site and was moved to Prospect Park last year.

The Battle of Gettysburg is split this year. The National Park Service will celebrate the event with its activities on the weekend of Friday, June 29th to Sunday, July 1st. The annual reenactment will occur on the following weekend, Friday, July 6th to Sunday, July 8th. July 4th is stuck in the middle of the week on Wednesday. The CDCWRT will be there on the first weekend selling postal cachets.

MISCELLANEOUS

Former president, Matt George, is cleaning house. He has an 18 VCR tape collection of all of Humphrey Bogart's movies. Many have never had the seal broken. We will run a silent auction the next several months. Whoever "buys" the tapes will donate the money to the CDCWRT and get a receipt for a charitable donation for the full amount. Yes you can have your cake and eat it too! Minimum bid is $150. Phone bids into Matt George at 355-2131.

In another matter, former chief historian for the NPS, Ed Bearss, broke his arm February 24th, when he miss-stepped in his house. He walked to a taxi stand and started his Wilderness tour for the Smithsonian. At Chancellorsville he was convinced to seek treatment, and our fried, Frank O'Reilly took over his tour. Ed was to leave on a Texas and Mexico tour the next day, but was convinced to cancel that tour.

This is the 200th anniversary of Robert E. Lee's birth. There is a new move to re-evaluate Lee and his legacy. "Lee has been so praised and distorted that they have made him more than human, and in so doing, made him less than human." Lee's position in history is being challenged, and a loud and public cultural war continues. The NAACP protested the Virginia General Assembly's use of $500,000 to refurbish the giant statue of Lee on Richmond's Monument Ave. All that was given was a $5000 grant to publish a tourist brochure on Lee related events in the state. Schools and Boy Scout Troops are dropping Lee's name. In recent years, Lee, the man, has begun to emerge from Lee, the mythic hero. We should be careful however, as historians, to not discard the "baby with the bathwater." ***From the Washington Post***

FALL TRIP

The fall trip will be to Gettysburg on Columbus Day weekend, October 5-8, 2007. Stacey Kilts, who is in our Round Table and who is in training to become a licensed park service guide, will be our personal guide. Sue Knost is putting together a program that will as entertaining and educational as other tours we have sponsored. Because the bus transportation costs have risen dramatically, if the minimum number of participants is not achieved, the trip will be canceled. Fall is a great time to be at Gettysburg. The cost will be approximated in up-coming newsletters, but it will be very reasonable as usual. Please start putting money aside now, so that when a $100 deposit is requested, the funds will be there.