



The Dispatch

Newsletter of the

Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

CDCWRT's web site: www.timesunion.com/communities/cdcwrt.htm

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**SEASON'S GREETINGS
JOYOUS NEW YEAR
HAPPY MILLENNIUM
YEAR 2000
AND SO BEGINS THE 135TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAST
YEAR OF THE CIVIL WAR**

The December Meeting
Saturday - Saturday
December 4, 1999

HOLIDAY INN
ROUTE 9.
LATHAM, NY

SOCIAL HOUR 6:30 P.M.
BUSINESS MEETING &
ELECTIONS 7:15 P.M.

CDCWRT MEETING

Our final meeting for the year will occur on Saturday, December 4th, at the Holiday Inn on Route 9 in Latham. This is also the meeting at which we will vote on the by-laws changes and elect the Board for the 2000 calendar year. We have chosen this site because this last meeting is also our holiday party, and there is NO CURFEW !! We have the Century Ballroom until midnight, unlike the libraries we have used in the past. Alcoholic beverages can be purchased at the Inn. Punch and soda will be provided by the Round Table. Bring you favorite treat to share with others.

There will be plenty of room for displays, so Don't forget to bring any pictures, albums, artifacts or displays that you would like to share with the membership. Such items always bring about lots of interesting conversations.

Our guest speaker for this meeting will be KEVIN RAWLINGS, OLE SAINT NICK from several years ago. Kevin will present a special talk entitled, THE CHANGING FACES OF OLD SAINT NICK FROM THE 4TH CENTURY TO THE 20TH CENTURY.

Using illustrations and paintings, Kevin will trace the changing faces of St. Nicholas to the present Santa Claus. With the advent of the American Civil War, and the drawings of Thomas Nast, Santa Claus' looks changed and became more standardized. The appearance of Santa was changed from an indistinct face, to a popular version, using Nast's own facial

features! Nast even uses his own children in the foreground of Santa pictures. Nast also uses his home mantelpiece in the background. The influence of Uncle Sam even appears.

Come and share an evening of enjoyment and good company as we celebrate the holiday season and the end of the 15th year of the CDCWRT.

As a special holiday "gift," Kevin will have copies of his books available for signing after the meeting. Normally priced at \$25, the book, WE WERE MARCHING ON CHRISTMAS DAY, will be available at the discount price of \$20 as a special member benefit.

BUT WAIT, THER'S MORE!!!

Entertainment will be provided by the musical minstrel quartet, HARMONY GRITS. The quartet, consisting of Tom Smith, Ray Smith, Steve Roth and Don Prockup, will make their public debut and will sing period music accompanied by instruments. In addition, our own student member, Roxanne Wegman, will play some period instrumental pieces. Roxanne played at Gettysburg this past summer!

Finally, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5TH, is the VICTORIAN STROLL IN DOWNTOWN TROY. As usual, the CDCWRT will be represented by displays in the Troy Post Office Building. Volunteers are asked to stop by around 11:00 A.M. to set up and help man the tables until 4:00 P.M. Kevin Rawlings will also be Old Saint Nick for the children who attend the stroll.

This will conclude CDCWRT activities for 1999, although, there may be a special postal cancellation on New Year's Eve in Albany. More details may be announced at the meeting. If modern civilization ends with Y2K, the next meeting of the RT will still be in the Bethlehem Library on Friday, January 14th. Please bring candles and kerosene lanterns if indicated.

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CDCWRT NEWS

BY-LAWS UPDATE

In reviewing the by-laws of the organization several months ago, the Board decided to update the by-laws, and to make some recommended changes. The single major change is an increase in the number of members on the Board. Enclosed in this newsletter is a copy of the by-laws with proposed deletions and replacement words or phrases. These changes will be voted upon at the December meeting. Please familiarize yourself with the articles. A copy of the finalized, approved by-laws will be sent to all members next year.

PROPOSED CANDIDATE SLATE

The proposed slate of candidates for the year January 2000 to December 2000 is as follows:

President	Matthew Farina
Vice-President	Tom Smith
Treasurer	Joe Stracuzzi
Secretary	Cindy Schechter
At-large	Jeff Sauter
At-large	Matt George
At-large	Paul Rivenburgh

Nominations of members in good standing may be made from the floor. Voting will then commence.

T-SHIRTS

Order now to reserve your CDCWRT Regimental T-shirt featuring Baseball in the Civil War, Camp Doubleday, Washington, DC in 1862. The shirt design is done in black on a gray shirt, and features an illustration from an actual soldier's letter written on the regimental stationary of the 76th NYVI.

The illustration used is the official drawing authorized for that regiment. It depicts the men of the 76th playing baseball outside of Washington in Camp Doubleday in May of 1862. (And they say that Doubleday never saw a game of baseball!) As you may know, the 76th NYVI was the first documented infantry regiment on the field at Gettysburg.

The 76th was raised around Cortland and Cooperstown, and the soldier whose letter to his wife is featured on the shirt, was actually from

the Cooperstown area. The soldier used the drawing of their game in camp as a map for his wife. When you look closely at the design, you can see his marks and labels explaining where his tent, the officers' tent, and the hospital were. He even places the location of Fort Stevens in the background!

Included with your purchase of the shirt is a guide to the drawing and a copy of the 1862 letter written to the soldier's wife. Shirt sizes available are Large, Extra-large, and XXL. Large and Extra-large are \$10, and XXL is \$12. These are the same shirts sold at Cooperstown for \$20, but are offered at discount to members. Other sizes can be ordered. Shirts will be available for pick-up at the December meeting. Shirts can be mail-ordered, and will be shipped USPS Priority Mail in time for Holiday gift-giving. Please add \$3.20 to your order for postage, and send to: CDCWRT, PO Box 14871, Albany, NY 12212-4871. Please include size, address, and your return address with your check.

WEB SITE NEWS

By Jon Olson

As you may know, the official web site of the RT is our *Times Union Web Site*. The URL for the web site is printed under our address on page one of the newsletter. I urge you to bookmark the address for future visits.

As promised in last month's column, this month I will focus on five of the customized pages. First, on the "Home Page" there is an invitation for people to join our group. Most importantly, links to all the other pages are listed in the navigational rails on the left-hand side of the page under the heading "Explore the Site." By the way, the links entitled "Event Calendar," "Newsletters," and "Links" in the larger type are pre-set by the TU and cannot be deleted. Therefore, for our events, click on "Calendar of Events" and for links click on "Links of Interest" instead of these pre-set links.

Second, the "Welcome Letter" page lists the officers and troops, and contains a lot of information on activities and membership. If anyone asks you about the RT, this is a good place to send them for starters.

Third, there's a page entitled 'Preservation News.' Currently on this page is a thank-you note from Brandon Schechter regarding his fund-raising efforts to save the Third Winchester Battlefield. Also, there is a complete list of the donations the RT has made to various preservation groups since 1985.

Fourth, there's a page called 'Member Journal.' The purpose of this page is to feature original Civil War writings of RT members such as articles, essays, book reviews, etc. For example, in the past, this page has featured an original essay by Gene Allison and has frequently featured book reviews by Mike Russert from *The Civil War News*.

Fifth, the 'Links of Interest' page contains links to a wide variety of Civil War web site, organized by subject.

There are five more customized pages and three 'canned' pages which I will be discussing in future columns. In the meantime I am always looking for material to keep the site fresh, so if you have any original material or news you'd like me to put on the site, or a Civil War site you think people would be interested in, please be sure to let me know. Please contact me if you have any questions. Call 785-1700, or e-mail jonolson@nycap.rr.com, or write to: P.O. Box 671, Newtonville, NY 12128.

NOVEMBER CONFERENCE

The 2nd Annual Northeast Conference on the Civil War was a success by any standard! The RT's own Dan Lorello started the weekend with an analysis of the problems and decisions that were encountered in bringing *The Union Preserved: A Guide to Civil War Records in the New York State Archives* to fruition. By the way, I received my monthly issue of the newsletter of the Melbourne American Civil War Round Table in Australia, and I quote, "May I recommend *The Union Preserved*:-----? It looks really useful." So our Dan has made it 'down under.' also.

Forty eight attendees were present at the Saturday conference and heard a series of excellent presentations on various topics. Dr. Thomas Carroll presentation on the Hudson-Mohawk region as the silicone valley of the 19th

Century was particularly well received. This scholarly presentation confirmed what Troy's own Mike Barrett has been saying for years. (Talk about a prophet in his own land!) Also very well received was Sarah Thomas' presentation about nurse Sallie Myers at Gettysburg.

Bud Hall as usual presented his in-depth study of the development of the Union cavalry as a fighting force in the Eastern theater of the War. Dr. John Nunes expertly covered the financing of the War by the sale tax stamps, and Dean Thomas demonstrated the making of Confederate cartridges.

Over 80 people attended the Saturday evening banquet. Dr. William Piston spoke on James Longstreet with emphasis on his actions at Gettysburg, the Lost Cause debate after the War, and the change in opinion about Longstreet in recent years. This has always been a controversial topic, and Dr. Piston's presentation proves there is still much to debate in regards to the War.

Finally, the *Gone with the Wind* screening at Proctor's Theater was attended by well over one thousand people. Representatives of several Civil War groups in the area were able to meet the public, answer questions, and perhaps recruit new members. Kudos to Program Chair, Sue Knost, and all those members who helped at the conference and banquet, especially Sheila Smith.

