



The Dispatch



144

Newsletter of the

Capital District Civil War Round Table

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

Volume 13 Number 4

December 1995

DECEMBER PROGRAM

FRIDAY, DEC. 8, 1995

Guilderland Public Library
Western Avenue, Guilderland NY

Doors Open: 6:30 PM
Program Begins: 7:00 PM

IMPORTANT NOTICE: CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION

Due to the continued construction at the Bethlehem Library, we are once again changing the location of our monthly meeting. As we did in October, we will meet on December 8, 1995 at the **Guilderland Public Library**, on Western Avenue. **The doors will open at 6:30 P.M. and the meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M..** However, unlike the last meeting when we had to be out by 9:00, we have arranged with the library so that we can stay for an extra hour in order to allow us an opportunity to have a real seasonal "social hour" after the meeting. Special snacks and drinks will be available, so please plan on staying and getting to know some new friends. More on this below!

From the east, Western Ave. is reached from the southern end of the Northway; take a right on Western to the intersection of Route

155. The library is on the left, just past the second light after crossing Rt. 155. From the west, it is on the right, past the second traffic light after passing Rt. 146 (the one to Altamont.)

The December 8, 1995 meeting brings our annual potpourri night where members and guests who don't have enough material to do a full lecture get to do short presentations on the topics of their choice. This year, as always, we have a very interesting selection. First up will be CDCWRT member **David S. Moore** of the NYS Library. David served as editor of I Will Try to Send You All the Particulars of the Fight, which was published this summer by The Friends of the NYS Newspapers Project. This is a collection of letters sent home by the troops and published in various newspapers throughout the state, along with contemporary engraved maps relating to the areas or subjects of the letters. Copies of the book will also be available for purchase, with profits helping to continue the excellent work of the Friends Project. [Ed. note: Makes a great Christmas present for that hard-to-buy-for CW buff on your list, even if that's you!]

Next we will hear from **Brandon Schecter**. Brandon is one of our younger CDCWRT members, and is also a very well versed Confederate reenactor. He will be discussing the seeming anomaly of "Black Confederate Soldiers." If he can get his first

book finished and published by next Friday, that will also be on sale. [Just kidding, Brandon. We certainly don't want to put any extra pressure on you. Take until January if you'd like.]

Last, and certainly not least, we will learn about the 55th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment from our special guest from the Norwich CWRT, **Katherine Dhalle**. This was a sister regiment to the famous 54th Mass.V.I., and even though deserving, never gets the credit which is due.

Additionally, as a special holiday treat and as part of the Board's desire to foster a more collegial attitude within the organization, we will be hosting an extended social hour after the end of the meeting. We have gained a number of new members over the last year or two, and unfortunately we haven't had many real opportunities lately to make sure that the new and the old get to mingle and share our common interests. We had discussed adjourning to a nearby public house for a party, but the logistics were rather daunting, so we have instead obtained an extra hour's use of the room in the library. There will be an assortment of delicious goodies and non-alcoholic beverages available. (Anyone who cares to contribute some special item from your own culinary repertoire is more than welcome to do so.) So come on now kids, mark your calendars, call the baby sitter, pin on those name badges and lets get together for a party!

CDCWRT CALENDAR

JAN. 12 FIRST '96 MEETING: **Dave Carhart** will speak on the Watervliet Arsenal, and it's industrial and economic contributions to the Union war effort.

FEB. 9 MEETING: **Tom Duclos**, curator of the Military Heritage Museum, will discuss the Albany Sanitary Commission Fair. The Commission was established to promote the health and welfare of the troops in the field, and the Fair was run as a fund raiser.

FEB. 20 BRUNSWICK HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Our own **Michael Barrett** will be presenting his slide lecture "Troy in the Civil War." [You couldn't possibly have been expecting some other topic!]

MAR. 9 ANNUAL CABIN FEVER BANQUET: Our speaker this year will be noted author, editor and historian **Brian Pohanka**. While his topic has not as yet been announced, those who remember his slide show and lecture on the archeological survey at the Little Big Horn battlefield will vouch that this is another "not to be missed" dinner.

APR. 12 MEETING: Nationally known artist and engraver **Stephen Elcorn** will discuss Civil War engravings and historical research.

MAY 10 MEETING: The new Chairman of the History Department at the US Military Academy at West Point, **Lt. Col. David T. Sautua**, will speak to us on a topic still to be determined.

JUNE MEETING: **Dr. Richard Somers**, Chief Archivist of the US Military Institute will address a topic which is yet to be determined. (Please note that the date of this meeting also needs to be firmed up, as we are looking to accommodate Dr. Somers. Details will be forthcoming.)

CDCWRT NEWS

THE OCTOBER MEETING

[Due to a processing error on my part, the November Dispatch did not have a report on **Mark Bodnar's** lecture on Lt. William Pohlman, who had been mortally wounded at Gettysburg. I have been a little concerned that some people who don't understand my good-natured disrespect of Mark (and his of me) might have taken that omission as a deliberate slight. Believe me, nothing could be further from the truth. Mark's love of his topic, and his years of diligent research, resulted in an excellent presentation that was truly well received by one of the biggest crowds we've had in quite some time. The only down side to the entire evening was that the regular door keepers were delayed in arriving, and that cost us our usual smooth running hospitality display, and darn near the monthly book raffle. But with a little creativity, all was resolved and the evening was a great success. So, Mark, thanks for an enjoyable evening, and I apologize again for the regrettable omission.]

[By the way, I have it on very good authority that if Mark finishes his book by next week, it will also be on sale at the meeting. Chances are good that it will be there, as he only has two more pages to color.]

THE NOVEMBER BANQUET

As expected the Fall Banquet was a huge success! At 95 attendees, we actually oversold the room by five people. **John Hennessy** was every bit as good a speaker as you had been repeatedly told he would be. His lecture on the Federal commanders involved in the Antietam campaign was so much more than a mere recap of the anecdotes one normally finds in the current literature. He just kept pulling out fresh and new material based on his current research. He maintained the rapt attention of the audience throughout [even my beloved Karen stayed awake. Those of you who know her well realize what a huge compliment that is

to any CW speaker!], and fielded a number of questions afterwards. If John's next work, a study of the subordinate commanders in the Army of the Potomac, is only half as good as the lecture that we got that night, I guarantee that it will be a best seller and a "must have" in any respectable CW library.

[It's all right, **Lance**, you can exhale now. We didn't spend enough time together for me to get any good new material to make jokes at your expense. But don't get comfortable, I'm sure I'll be able to make something up for next time.]

ELECTIONS

Please remember that the December meeting is the time for annual elections. While almost the entire slate of current officers are willing to stand for another term, the position of Secretary is open. The Secretary takes the minutes at the Board meetings (10 per year), and may send out half a dozen letters per year. While the workload may not be heavy, it is still a very important position within the group. Please consider investing a little bit of your time to help keep this very worthwhile organization running. As always, nominations are accepted from the floor for any position, and if none are seen or heard, we will be forced to resort to the long established tradition of nominating whoever fails to show up. [That's how I started on the Board six years ago.] So take heed, and if you absolutely, positively don't want to become an officer, you had best show up at this month's meeting to defend yourself.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Our current balance is \$9,797.76 including a net profit of \$533.02 from the banquet. The lion's share (\$475) of this profit is attributable to the map raffle, which was a very nice success. Kudos to Chairman Dan for that idea!

We will be disbursing a goodly chunk of this money in the next few months. To date,

suggestions have been received for donations to APCWS and Grant's Cottage, and land purchases at Brandy Station, Cedar Creek, Malvern Hill, Third Winchester and Wise's Field on South Mountain, among others. Possibilities also include restoration/ repair work on the GAR monument in Albany Rural Cemetery, the Ellsworth monument in Mechanicsville, Grant's Tomb and the NY Monument at Gettysburg. Information on any of these may be obtained by contacting any Board member. Your input on these or any other suitable project for donation is always welcome.

BOARD MEETING

The Board met on November 21, 1995. Among other things on the agenda, Sue Knost reported on the activities planned for the Victorian Stroll in Troy on December 3, and on the possibility of another cachet sales opportunity at Crossgates Mall on December 16. Sue also discussed the possibility of getting another Dale Gallon print in exchange for a donation to Save Historic Antietam Foundation. Dale has apparently just completed another in his Antietam series prints and has donated 40 for use in preservation fundraising. This is how we have obtained a number of other prints which we have then raffled off, in order to make even more money for preservation. We should hear more on this within the next month or two.

Joe Stracuzzi discussed his thoughts on another field trip in the spring. Several suggestions were made, including the Springfield (Mass.) Armory, Grant's Tomb, the West Point cemetery, Ticonderoga, or the Saratoga battlefields. Joe has volunteered to head this project, and would be very grateful for input from the membership. In the same vein, it was discovered that we never actually gave Tony Tommell his promised honorarium for the Fort Stanwix and Oriskany tour he led this past spring. Therefore, the Board directed

a check for \$100.00 to Tony in appreciation for the terrific job which he did.

Another issue discussed was the feasibility of sending out a "new members packet" which would include a copy of the organizational Constitution, membership brochure, latest newsletter and (possibly) a list of past speakers. The Board approved the idea, and it should commence once we have our new brochures prepared. It has also been agreed that the mailing of the Constitution in the annual December newsletter (which was an idea started last year) was an unwarranted expense. Copies of this will be included for new members, and additional copies will now be made available at the front desk at regular meetings.

NAME BADGES

Speaking of pinning on the badges for the Christmas party, [Yeah, all right, it was three pages ago, so sue me. That's just the way my mind works.] it's time once again to start taking names from those who need/ want/ can't live without your very own CDCWRT name badge. A sign up sheet will be at the reception desk at the next meeting or two, as we need to have 20 names before we can submit our order. If for some reason you can't make those meetings but still desire to immortalize your membership, please feel free to call Chairman Dan for entry on the list.

The cost will be the same as we have done in the past. Depending on the number ordered at one time, the cost is about \$5.50 each. However, because we're such nice people, you pay only the ridiculously low price of \$3.00 for each one ordered, and the group picks up the balance of the cost. Other than the sheer joy of getting to read this newsletter every month, and listening to some pretty darn good speakers, the name badges are probably the best bargain that you get for the dues money.

MORE VIDEOS

Chairman **Dan Lorello** has recently lent several of his videos to the CDCWRT video lending library. All of the videos may be taken out for a one month period, free of charge. Included in this latest grouping are:

1. ABC's Lincoln Part I and Part II
2. Gettysburg/ Bloody Shenendoah
3. Echoes of the Blue & Gray
4. The Making of Gettysburg
5. Young Mr. Lincoln/ They've Killed the President
6. 54th Colored Infantry
7. Touring CW Battlefields/ The Vanishing CW
8. Lincoln: Trial by Fire
9. Visions of the CW
10. The Lincoln Assassination (History Channel)

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE REQUEST

I have received a letter from CDCWRT member **Mark Jordan**, relating to a seminar which he had attended at SUNY last month. One of the topics addressed was the archeological exploration currently being undertaken on the "Maple Leaf," a Union baggage ship. The ship was sunk in the St. John's River near Jacksonville, Florida in 1864. At the time, she was carrying the entire baggage of three regiments which had recently arrived in the area; the 13th Indiana and the 112th and 169th New York. None of the baggage had been recovered until the present exploration began a few years ago, and the mud of the river bottom has preserved the items to an astonishing degree.

The exploration is being conducted by East Carolina University. The leader of the project

is looking for any and all information regarding the regiments and their personnel. If anyone has any information which may be helpful, you may contact:

Dr. Lawrence E. Babits

Program in Maritime History and Nautical Archeology

Admiral Ernest Eller House

East Carolina University

Greenville, NC 27858-4353

[The 169th NYVI was a regiment which originated in **Troy** as the 11th company raised for the organization of the 125th "The Rennselaer Regiment" Infantry. Being an extra company, they were not mustered in with the 125th, and so avoided the embarrassment of the Harper's Ferry surrender. The Governor was persuaded to allow the raising of another regiment, based around the nucleus of this extra company, and upon being mustered in as the 169th, they took the name "**The Second Troy Regiment.**" The original "**Troy Regiment**" was the 2nd NYVI, commanded by Col. (later Major General) Joseph B. Carr. Among a number of fights to their credit, the 169th were heavily engaged in the Bermuda Hundred campaign, the Crater at Petersburg, Dutch Gap, and the final assault on Fort Fisher, NC, in January of 1865. Counting the 28 officers and men who died in the explosion of the powder magazine the day after Fort Fisher was captured, the regiment suffered at least 556 casualties, of whom 160 were killed.]

[According to Phisterer, the 112th "Chautauqua Regiment" NYVI was organized in Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties, and mustered in on September 11, 1862, for three years. Not from **Troy!** Who cares?]

★ ★ ★

CDCWRT
 P.O. Box 14871
 Albany, New York 12212-4871



Created in 1984, the Capital District Civil War Round Table is an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held monthly at the Bethlehem Public Library in Delmar, New York. This newsletter is published ten times per year. Annual dues are \$15. The purpose of the organization is to promote, educate, and further stimulate interest in, and discussion of, all aspects of the Civil War period.



To join or renew membership, send \$15 to the CDCWRT address below.

The Officers

Chairman	Dan Lorello
Vice-Chair	Sue Knost
Treasurer	Matt Farina
Secretary	Robert Johnson
At-Large	Mark Bodnar
At-Large	Joe Stracuzzi
Ex-Officio	Michael Barrett

The Troops

Programs	Nancy Shour
Newsletter	Michael Barrett
Preservation	Richard Becker
Field Trips	Mark Silo, Kathy Silo
Banquets	Michael Aikey, Kathy Silo
Refreshments	Nancy Shour
Membership	Kathy Silo, Russ Denegar
Video Library	Joe Stracuzzi
Historian	Ray Smith