

The First Defenders

CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

September 2007

We start the 2007-2008 campaign on a sad note. Our long-time board member and newsletter editor Tony Reilly passed away on August 14, 2007, after a brief illness. A charter member, Tony provided many years of invaluable service to the round table and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. He was a good friend, who always stepped up when there was something to be done. The round table will make a contribution to St. Jude's Medical Center in Tony's memory, and this year's donation to a Civil War site will also be dedicated to him. God bless you Tony, and thank you for all you did.

Robert L. Hunt 1994

"East Toward Gettysburg"

2007-2008 Schedule

Below is a tentative roster for this season's programs:

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| September 11: | "Civil War Artifact Show-and-Tell: A Tribute to Jack Gurney" |
| October 9: | Colonel Robert Dalessandro, "Civil War Army Staffs" |
| November 13: | Ronald Lauser, "The 4 th Texas Regiment" |
| December 11: | Christmas Party featuring the music of Charlie Zahn |
| January 8, 2008: | Round Table Open Discussion (topic to be selected) |
| February 12: | Ron Rhein and Mike Gabriel, "The Battle of Stone's River" |
| March 11: | Dave Unger, "Nathan Bedford Forrest" |
| April 8: | Joe Schaeffer, "The Cushing Brothers" |
| May 13: | Ed Ewing, "The Artillery Corps" |

Membership Renewals

It is time to re-enlist in the First Defenders. The price is \$20. The round table has openings in its memberships so now would be a great time to encourage a family member or friend to join with you. We've included an extra renewal form for them. Please return your completed form to **Pat Christ, 332 W. Main Street, Kutztown PA 19530** by **October 9, 2007**, or turn it in at the meetings.

September Meeting

The round table will open its new campaign with a tribute to Jack Gurney. For many years Jack has enriched our monthly meetings by bringing guns, knives, and other objects from his extensive collection of Civil War artifacts to show us. On Tuesday, September 11, at the Moselem Springs Inn, the First Defenders will have a show-and-tell night in Jack's honor. We ask that you bring some Civil War item and briefly describe it to our members. This could be a letter, photograph, weapon, piece of clothing, cartridge box, quilt, painting, or whatever. It should be interesting to see what our membership owns and what stories these objects tell. Make it a point to be there and bring a friend.

The dinner selections for the September meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast, Broiled Haddock, and Baked Ziti with Meatballs**. The price is **\$18.00**. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at **(610) 683-4384** by **Monday, September 3**, and speak clearly. Please also call **after 5:00 PM**.

Starting with the October meeting, the price of the dinner will rise to **\$19.00**. The board is sorry to have to raise the price, but the cost of the dinners has risen since last year. Without this increase, the round table would lose money on each meal.

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

October 2007

Round Table Business

Our 2007-2008 campaign began with 52 members in attendance as President Mike Gabriel opened the meeting. Arlan Christ, treasurer, reported income of \$2019.00 with expenses of \$2826.13 leaving a balance of \$2595.64 as of September 11, 2007. No money was in the preservation fund since disbursements were made at the end of last season. Arlan provided two letters of thanks received regarding the preservation money sent last spring.

Membership secretary Pat Christ reported that 57 members have renewed their memberships, and we welcomed 3 new members at the meeting. The membership is encouraged to seek new members to bring membership totals around 110. We are currently well under that number.

A motion was made and passed to collect money, in addition to Tom Tate's book raffle proceeds, for battlefield preservation at the October meeting in memory of Tony Reilly. Mike Gabriel spoke of Tony and his cheerful ways and diligent work for the round table, and members honored a moment of silence in his memory. Following Richard Kennedy's reading of the summer board meeting's minutes, Richard paid tribute to Tony and was joined by others echoing similar sentiments. Jim Reilly, Tony's brother, thanked the members of the round table for the many cards and notes sent to Tony while he was hospitalized. Cathie Kennedy had contacted all members in August to let them know of Tony's illness. We appreciate her and Richard's efforts in keeping us informed.

The following tribute to Tony was sent by Tom Tate:

No one supposedly is irreplaceable. To the extent that someone comes along and takes over a job for one who has passed on, it is true. However, that's only half of the story. As Rich Kennedy said at our September meeting, don't ask for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee. We, too, are diminished by Tony's passing. No one can replace for us the individual charm that was Tony Reilly. His warm, friendly greeting, his special smile, his good-natured ribbing from time to time and his special way of making you feel that you were special and important to him cannot be replaced.

Among those of us who remain are many cheerful friends whose greetings and comradeship we look forward to and enjoy. While these friendships are as true and rewarding in their own special ways, what we shared with Tony Reilly was unique and, regrettably, ended with his passing.

Tom Tate reported the following about the Book Raffle/Preservation Fund:

The members got our preservation fund off to a good start at the September meeting. Since there were no expenses because of the books donated by the members, the entire \$116.00 raised by raffle ticket sales can go to the preservation fund. While we thank all members for their support, it was gratifying to see the support given to preservation by our new members. Your enthusiasm is greatly appreciated.

Tom and Russ Angstadt provided preservation reports with optimistic results. Of course, there is still much to be done, and we will continue our efforts as a round table to provide as much financial support to endangered fields as possible.

Dave Fox discussed the 2008 field trip prospects. Dave has done planning thus far for May 17, 2008, to West Point. He and Roger Cotterill will travel there at the end of September to work out further details. Some members discussed a desire to travel to the medical museum at Frederick MD, as well as the Monocacy Battlefield. A final decision

has been tabled for future discussion with Dave and Roger continuing their plans for the West Point trip.

September's Program: Members Honor Jack Gurney by Sharing Their Artifacts

No round table meeting would seem complete without Jack sharing his Civil War artifacts each month. His astounding collection never ceases to amaze and educate. This month members were encouraged to "show and tell" their own items in honor of Jack who, of course, began the program with a collection of projectiles.

Twelve members then described the items from their own collections. It was an eclectic group of artifacts including, but not limited to, General Gregg's books, Civil War quilts, an 1816 Springfield .69 cal. smoothbore musket, mitten and Havelock patterns with a photograph of Rosa Muhlenberg Nicholls whose Ladies Aid Society used those patterns, a painting of the Diamond in Chambersburg during the Civil War done by a Robesonia resident, a prayer book carried by a member's relative during the war, a lock from an 1855 Springfield rifle, an 1863 map reproduction like one used by General Grant, a letter penned by Quartermaster General of the Union Army Montgomery Meigs, a letter from a collection of a member's great, great, great-grandfather, and much more.

This unique program successfully opened this campaign. Those in attendance seemed truly interested in the items discussed and shared. We left the meeting in anticipation of a good year ahead.

Membership Renewals

This is a reminder that it is re-enlistment time. Membership is \$20. Please return the renewal form in last month's newsletter if you have not already done so with a check payable to The First Defenders CWRT, and mail it to Pat Christ, 332 W. Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530. The deadline is October 9, 2007. You may also bring it to the October meeting and hand deliver it to Pat.

...about the Newsletter

Tony Reilly left **big** shoes to fill with the round table newsletter. He was devoted to making it an interesting and edifying publication. Tony's encyclopedic knowledge of all things related to the Civil War is intimidating to say the least. I have agreed to try doing the newsletter on a trial basis. If any member is interested in helping, please let me or any board member know. If anyone wishes to include articles or notices in the newsletter, please contact me—Linda Zeiber, 739 Brownsville Road, Sinking Spring, PA 19608, 610-678-1168, Zeiber@msn.com. The deadline for all submissions will be one week after the date of each round table meeting.

October 9, 2007 Meeting

October's meeting will feature Colonel Robert Dalessandro speaking on the topic of "Civil War Army Staffs."

Dinner selections for the October meeting are **Baked Ham Steak with grape glaze, Stuffed Shells with spinach tomato cream sauce, and Grilled Honey Mustard Salmon**. The price is \$19.00. Note that this is a one dollar increase over last month's meal price. The cost of the dinners has risen since last year. Without this increase, the round table would lose money on each meal.

Please call in your reservation and menu selection at **610-683-4384 by Monday, October 1**, and speak clearly. Please call after 5:00 PM.

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

November 2007

Round Table Business

The October meeting, attended by 59 members, began with an update on the May field trip to West Point. Dave Fox reported that he and Roger Cotterill met with Major Raymond Kimball and toured the facility several weeks prior to our meeting. Dave is confident that a one-day trip is feasible. He is proposing a Saturday evening banquet at the renowned Thayer Hotel. Dave and Roger are impressed with the opportunity that this trip will provide for our round table. He expects to announce the cost of the trip at the November meeting.

Arlan Christ reported a balance in the treasury from 9/11/07 of \$2,595.64. Meals, raffle tickets, and dues resulted in an income of \$2,192.00. After expenses, our current balance in the treasury is \$3,725.85. Pat Christ, membership chair, advised us that we currently have 85 members who have paid dues. Dave Fox suggested advertising for new members at the Exeter Township Library during a Civil War book club that has recently begun meeting there.

Tom Tate's preservation/raffle report is as follows:

In addition to buying \$113.00 worth of raffle tickets, you members strongly supported the special extra preservation fund in the name of Tony Reilly. You may remember the suggestion that, since our meals for this year will be \$19.00, we contribute the extra dollar to an additional preservation fund in the name of Tony Reilly. We collected another \$25.00 which gives us a total preservation fund dollars of \$138.00. Along with the \$116.00 from the September meeting, we are now at \$254.00 in our fund. Not bad considering that we began with a zero balance. Because of the generous contributions of books by our members, all of our income went directly to preservation since there were no expenses against the fund.

October's Program: Dr. Richard J. Sommers Discusses the Generalships of Grant and Lee during the Siege of Petersburg

I had an opportunity to talk with Dr. Sommers prior to the meeting and learned that he has been a member of the Harrisburg Civil War Round Table for 36 years serving as president for three years and program chair for 27 years. He is currently the H. K. Johnson Professor of History at the Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, PA. He has served on the staff of the Military History Institute for 37 years. Dr. Sommers has written many published works and is best-known for his book, *Richmond Redeemed*.

Dr. Sommers began his eloquent and impassioned presentation with a background of the Petersburg siege. The siege was the longest campaign of the Civil War lasting 9½ months. The four railroads that ran into Petersburg were Richmond's lifeline and, thus, lay its military importance. Protecting Petersburg meant protecting Richmond. In late spring of 1864, Grant began extending his left through a series of battles including the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor. The siege of Petersburg began in the summer. This was a strategic rather than a classic siege. It took place on both sides of the James River. Grant

continually sent out offensives with the 5th causing the greatest peril to Richmond when Benjamin Butler's forces assaulted Fort Harrison.

Grant's goal was to destroy the Confederacy. His objective was to take Richmond by defeating the Confederate army or forcing it into the open. He realized that a Napoleonic victory was impossible and never succumbed to Napoleonic myth. Rather, he built one tactical advance after another turning them into strategic victory. The attack accomplished his victories. He continued his Western approach in the East soon learning that the East was not the West. He was a fast learner and used his experience well. He forbade frontal attacks against fortified positions which had failed so miserably in the past.

Grant's war became a war of attrition in strategic campaign. He used battles as a method to push his foe over the brink. He used a series of 2-pronged strikes and learned timing. His approach was not brilliant but effective. He felt confident that he could do the job. Often deferring to subordinates, he let them carry out operations. He was sensitive to the well-being of his troops. He did not battle his own government and realized that the enemy was Richmond and not Washington. He always maneuvered to keep himself supplied. Although he was not a perfect general, he was effective remaining unshaken in resolve.

Robert E. Lee's goal was to secure his nation's independence. His strategy was to keep the Federals away from Richmond. Mobility and initiative were always his hallmarks. He was confined to counterattacks to stop the Union juggernaut from cutting the Petersburg railroad lines. He always strove to redirect unfavorable tendencies to his advantage. He didn't fall back; he fought back. No doubt, being named commander-in-chief of the Confederate army in February 1865 came too late.

How was he able to hold off Grant? He used all available troops--militia, local defense troops, and provisional forces made up of citizens, patients, and students. He built field works and modified the defenses at Petersburg and Richmond using the terrain to his advantage. He knew it well! He was not bound by organizational structure, and he had an excellent relationship with his war department and president.

We all know the outcome of the siege of Petersburg which pitted giants Grant and Lee against each other. Dr. Sommers presented an effective comparison and contrasting of these two great generals who went head-to-head in the waning months of the Civil War. His vast knowledge of the subject and his passion for it were quite evident. It was an excellent presentation in every way, and we thank him for being with us for the evening.

November 13, 2007 Meeting

November's meeting will feature Ronald Lauser making a presentation about "The 4th Texas Regiment." Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Boneless Pork Loin with Pineapple Sauce, Grilled Marinated Chicken Romano, or Broiled Haddock**. The price of the meals is \$19.00. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610-683-4384 by Monday, November 5, 2007. Please call after 5:00 PM and speak clearly.

The First Defenders

Civil War Round Table Newsletter

December 2007

Round Table Business

The November 13th meeting was attended by 62 members and guests. Dave Fox and Roger Cotterill submitted the following update regarding the May field trip:

We have the framework in place for our May 17, 2008, field trip—the bus and banquet room are booked and the details for the West Point Military Academy tour are in place. We now need a commitment from members planning to go. Please call Dave Fox at 610-582-9245 or e-mail Roger Cotterill at fiatlux@shenhgts.net with your intentions. If you plan to go but are afraid to commit because of future unforeseen obligations, please still let us know since this will help determine whether the trip is a “go” or not.

Also indicate your choice of dinner entrée, Roast Prime Rib of Beef au Jus or Chicken Cordon Bleu. The total cost per person for the trip will be around \$80 which we will ask for prior to the trip. The bus will depart from Kutztown University’s Lytle Hall parking lot at 7:00 a.m. and return around 10:00 p.m. Your promptness with a response will help us finalize what should be a great trip.

Pat Christ reported that we currently have 89 members. We are still seeking new members so share the good news of our organization with anyone who may be interested in joining. Dave Fox brought 3 guests from the Exeter Library Civil War Book Club, one who joined our round table.

Treasurer Arlan Christ reported a balance in the treasury from October 9, 2007, of \$3,725.85. Receipts from last month totaled \$1,647.00 bringing the treasury to \$5,372.85. Expenses of \$1,359.92 leave us with a current balance of \$4,012.93.

Tom Tate gave the following report concerning the book raffle and preservation:

We raised another \$143.00 for battlefield preservation with \$138 in ticket sales and a \$5.00 donation. At this time, I don’t know the exact amount the members have contributed to the special fund in Tony Reilly’s memory. Our preservation fund is up to \$422.00 plus the money received in Tony’s memory.

In preservation, it seems that old Fort Monroe has an uncertain future, and preservationists need to keep an eye on what is happening there.

Ed Ewing shared two Union cartridge boxes and explained their use and history. Each box held two tins containing 20 rounds each. One can discern a Union box from a Confederate box by the stitching; Confederate stitching was much cruder. The 1861 model box is the most common. Later boxes have an inspector’s stamp with an eagle plate. Thanks, Ed, for bringing these artifacts for us to see.

November’s Program: Ronald Lauser, Re-enactor with the 4th Texas Regiment

Ronald Lauser of Delaware County had his Civil War interested piqued while on a 10th grade field trip to Gettysburg. His interest in Company B, the “Tom Green Rifles”

of the 4th Texas Regiment happened by accident. While driving one day, he noticed a group of re-enactors, stopped and chatted with them. He decided to join the group and has been re-enacting with them since 1996. He has attended re-enactments over most of eastern Pennsylvania and has met re-enactors from all over American and many European countries.

Ron began his presentation by describing his uniform and two rifled muskets. He was dressed in butternut, wearing a Type 2 shell jacket which had replaced frock coats that required too much fabric. His homespun shirt and braces were from the 1863 period. His hat was not official issue. Many Confederates made do with what they owned personally. A Confederate soldier's equipment included a cartridge box, a cap box, and a bayonet. Their haversacks contained food such as cornmeal, bacon, salt pork, and hard tack if they could get it. A soldier also carried a metal or wooden canteen—most Confederates had wooden ones—, a mess kit, a shelter and bed roll, and a pack. Packs were often discarded as the war went on because of the extra weight that an infantry soldier had to bear during long marches.

In the middle of 1862, the Texas Brigade was taken over by John Bell Hood. Under his command they fought at 2nd Manassas, South Mountain, and Antietam. Hood was then moved to division command, but the moniker of "Hood's Texas Brigade" stuck throughout the war. The 4th participated in the Fredericksburg and Gettysburg campaigns. They viewed entering Pennsylvania as one big foraging campaign.

Following Gettysburg, the Texans were sent to the Army of the Tennessee with Longstreet's Corps. They did eventually come east again and fought at the Wilderness where they had a 70% casualty rate. They were involved at Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, and the Petersburg siege. The Texas Brigade, recruited from the Austin area, had begun the war with 4,400 men; 600 survived unscathed. The 4th Texas had 142 men at Appomattox where the survivors were paroled.

Quotable

Do you have a favorite quote from the Civil War period of history? If you would like to share yours, send it to Linda Zeiber, zeibers@comcast.net/610-678-1168, or bring it to a meeting. I will share mine with you in this newsletter. I am certain that all of you have read it before, but it bears reading again.

---from William Tecumseh Sherman

I hate newspapermen. They come into camp and pick up their camp rumors and print them as facts. I regard them as spies, which, in truth, they are. If I killed them all, there would be news from Hell before breakfast.

I think I understand what military fame is; to be killed on the field of battle and have your name misspelled in the newspapers.

December 11th Meeting

December's meeting will feature the music of Charlie Zahn as we celebrate the upcoming Christmas holidays. These musicians played and sang for us last December and provided excellent entertainment. So plan to attend and bring a spouse or friend. Dinner selections for the meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast, Grilled Honey Mustard Salmon, and Baked Ziti with Meatballs**. The price is \$20.00 for the December meeting. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at **610-683-4384** by **Monday, December 3, 2007**. Please call after 5:00 PM and speak clearly.

January Open Forum Round Table

The topic for January's open round table will be a discussion of the members' favorite Civil War regiments, both North and South, and why.

The First Defenders Civil Round Table Newsletter

January 2008

Round Table Business

The last Round Table meeting of 2007 brought 54 members to Moselem Springs to enjoy dinner, fellowship, and entertainment provided by Charlie Zahm. President Mike Gabriel opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer.

Field Trip Update

Dave Fox gave a brief update regarding the May 2008 field trip to West Point. Dave has received responses from approximately 25 members planning to participate. He urges any others to contact him at 610.582.9245 or e-mail Roger Cotterill at fiatlux@shenhgts.net as soon as possible. Dave and Roger have put much time and energy into this trip and are doing everything possible to keep costs down by filling the bus. They are confident of providing a memorable day to all in attendance. They also remind all members that spouses and friends are welcome to join us.

Report from the Treasurer

Arlan Christ gave his monthly treasurer's report beginning with a balance of \$4,012.93 on November 13, 2007. After expenses and receipts, he showed a balance of \$4,065.38 on December 11, 2007. Both Arlan and Tom Tate keep tabs on the Preservation Fund which will be reported in Tom's report.

Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate sent the following report:

At our December Christmas program meeting, we raised \$100.00 for battlefield preservation. Donations made in the name of Tony Reilly usually are collected by Pat and Arlan Christ as people pay for dinner. Sometimes my report of preservation money does not include the latest donations made in Tony's memory. As of now, our preservation funds stand at \$557.00. From what was said by the membership at the December meeting, it looks as if the Glendale site on the Peninsula will be a candidate for our preservation money.

Our book inventory is good, and we have member donations to thank for that.

Russ Angstadt reported the preservation situation at Harper's Ferry. A developer is currently working with the National Park Service. The original developer is out of the picture thankfully. Russ shared with us that the Civil War Preservation Trust is now 10 years old and has saved 25,000 acres of hallowed ground. Battlefield preservation is a critical issue for many round table members who are also members of CWPT. We have every reason to be proud of our round table's contributions to preservation for many years.

Artifacts

Ed Ewing gave members a brief education about Civil War plates which he collects. He brought some of his collection to the meeting for members to see. He reported that Ohio, Maine, and New York produced the majority of plates which were used for cartridge boxes and belt buckles. Many of these items were discarded during the war because they were broken. Those that survived the war were frequently found on the dead on battlefields. Ed provided us with interesting insight on these highly collectible artifacts.

Welcome New Members

Three new members have joined our ranks. Our round table family is pleased to welcome Barbara Lachowski, Pat Pinto, and Joe Ambrose. Next time you notice an unfamiliar face, introduce yourself and say hello to our newest members. Our membership is still somewhat below our usual level. Remember to invite friends, colleagues, or associates to join us.

December's Program: A Musical Christmas with Charlie Zahm

If you missed December's meeting and have already gotten your 2008 calendar, right now go and mark the second Tuesday in December which will be next year's December meeting. Hope that the Round Table is lucky enough to get Charlie Zahm to entertain us for yet another year. You could additionally kick yourself for missing him a few weeks ago. Yes, he's that good!

Charlie Zahm specializes in Celtic, Early American, and Civil War period music. His powerful baritone voice filled our dining room with an eclectic assortment of songs covering the years before, during, and after the Civil War. In addition to his beautiful voice, Charlie is an excellent guitarist and shares his music with genuine passion. He shared the stories of his songs with us as well. Should you attend any Celtic festivals which have become quite popular, you are sure to find Charlie performing.

Quotable

Tom Tate sent me a quote describing one of my favorite Union generals:

Theodore Lyman was an aide to General George G. Meade right after the Battle of Gettysburg. He was great in writing descriptions of the men that he came in contact with. Of General John Gibbon he wrote that he was "cool as a steel knife."

The following is a quote from Abraham Lincoln to a delegation of Congressmen that urged Lincoln to remove Grant because he drank too much:

"I then began to ask them if they knew what he drank, what brand of whiskey he used, telling them most seriously that I wished they would find out. They conferred with each other and concluded they could not tell what brand he used. I urged them to ascertain and let me know, for if it made fighting generals like Grant I should like to get some of it for distribution."

Send your favorite quote to Linda Zeiber at zeibers@comcast.net for publication in the next newsletter.

January 8, 2008 Meeting

January's meeting will be a true round table open forum meeting. Members are urged to think about their favorite Civil War Regiment(s) either North or South and come prepared to discuss why it is so.

Dinner selections for the meeting are Hawaiian Chicken, Pork Chops with gravy, and Stuffed Shells with spinach tomato cream sauce. The price is \$19.00 for meals. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at **610.683.4384 by Monday, December 31, 2007**. Please call after 5:00 PM and speak clearly.

February's Meeting

Mike Gabriel and Ron Rhein go west again in February with a presentation on the Battle of Stones River. They are always inspiring, edifying, and entertaining so plan to be there. Meanwhile...

Have a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

The First Defenders Civil War Roundtable Newsletter

February 2008

Round Table Business

President Mike Gabriel called the January meeting to order with 37 members in attendance. The first order of business called for a field trip update from Dave Fox.

Field Trip Update

As of this writing, Dave has received 30+ commitments from members for the May 17th trip to West Point which is an adequate number assuring the trip. Dave has asked that those planning to attend begin sending checks made payable to The First Defenders CWRT in the amount of \$80.00 per person. Dave's address is 577 Cedar Hill Road, Birdsboro, PA 19508. His phone number is 610.582.9245 should you have any questions. Also, feel free to bring a check to the February meeting to pay for your trip if you would prefer not to mail it. While no deadline has been announced at this point, he would appreciate your attention to this matter at your earliest convenience.

Be reminded that spouses and friends are welcome to attend the field trip. Dave also reminded everyone going to take photo ID along since West Point is a military installation. Drivers' licenses are appropriate ID's. Roger Cotterill is working with Dave on the trip and asks you to correct his e-mail address in the new membership roster, which Pat Christ distributed at the January meeting. Roger's e-mail is now fiatlux@shenhgts.net. He, too, can field questions and concerns about the field trip.

Treasurer's Report

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report beginning with a December 4, 2007, balance of \$4065.38. Receipts from the December meeting totaled \$1,160 bringing the amount to \$5,225.38. Expenses from the meeting amounted to \$1265.46 leaving a balance of \$3,959.92. Preservation funds are addressed in Tom Tate's report, which follows.

Membership Report

Membership Chair Pat Christ reported that the Round Table currently has 93 members.

Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate submitted the following report:

Despite a smaller turnout than usual, we raised another \$101.00 for preservation through ticket sales. Another \$56 was raised for preservation in Tony Reilly's name. Our total now stands at \$714.00.

The members have also been generous with donating books for the raffle, which keeps the costs down significantly. Thanks to all who donate.

If we decide to donate any or all of our preservation funds to acquiring Glendale or Frayser's Farm, we need to contribute to CWPT and specify that the money is to go to that site.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing brought a 69 caliber 1849 Springfield smoothbore for us to see. He explained that it was the first long gun made at Harpers Ferry with interchangeable parts thus making it the first modern weapon made by the US Government. The stocks of these guns were made from Pennsylvania walnut until 1855. Ed also displayed a Confederate ramrod which he acquired from the famous Shields' collection. Thanks for sharing your artifacts and expertise.

January's Program: An Open Forum Discussion of Favorite Regiments

Mike Gabriel began the round table discussion with comments about the 5th New Hampshire commanded by Col. Edward Cross. Cross, who was killed at Gettysburg at 31 years of age, fascinates him. Cross had started the first Arizona newspaper in 1858 and, on hearing about the

attack on Ft. Sumter, came east and started a school for officers. Prior to Gettysburg, the 5th New Hampshire had been engaged on the Sunken Road at Antietam.

Tom Tate talked about the 110th Pennsylvania in which he had ancestors who fought. He described the 110th as being not a particularly glorious unit. About half of the 110th came from Philadelphia and the other half came from Central Pennsylvania. They were engaged at the first battle of Kernstown, fought in the Valley and at Cross Keys. They missed Antietam but fought at Fredericksburg and suffered huge losses at Chancellorsville. They saw action at Gettysburg in DeTrobriand's 3rd Brigade.

Mike Straus reminded us of his 10 ancestors who fought with the 151st Pennsylvania also known as the "School Teachers' Regiment". During a field trip to Gettysburg in 2003, Mike had explained in great detail the action of the 151st while we stood on the field at Gettysburg near Reynolds' Woods. We learned the details of his ancestors during that day of battle where the regiment lost 72 men. By the end of the war, only 3 men returned home unscathed. The 151st primarily was made up of men from Berks and Juniata Counties, many of whom were teachers.

Rodney LaPearl spoke of Wilders Lightning Brigade, which was part of the Army of the Cumberland. He told us that they really came into their own at Chickamauga. Rodney also talked about Confederate states' contributions to the Union effort. Every Confederate state contributed one Federal regiment except South Carolina. Over 100,000 men from states that had seceded served the Union cause.

Quotable

Tom Tate sent the following quote from Ordnance Chief General James Wolfe Ripley. Tom writes, "He is much maligned, but I take his part because I think he made the right decision in staying with the muzzleloader. In his memoirs he wrote, '**There has been nothing remarkable in my intent to make it appear otherwise.**' We could use a few more modest men like that in public life especially if they are conservatives."

I offer a quote from General Philip H. Sheridan who spoke of Joshua Chamberlain leading his men into battle, Five Forks, April 1, 1865, "**By God, that's what I want to see! General officers at the front!**"

Send your quotes to Linda Zeiber at zeibers@comcast.net for inclusion in a future newsletter.

February 12, 2008 Meeting

Mike Gabriel and Ron Rhein are the speakers for the February meeting. Their topic is the Battle of Stone's River. Plan to attend to enjoy fellowship and history on a very auspicious date in Civil War history!

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Baked Ham Steak with Thompson Grape Glaze, Grilled Marinated Chicken Romano, Broiled Haddock in garlic clam stock.**

The price is \$19.00 for meals. **Please call your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, February 5, 2008. Please call after 5:00 PM and speak clearly.**

March's Meeting

Member Dave Unger will present the evening's discussion of Nathan Bedford Forrest. Mark your calendar on March 11th and plan to attend. Can spring be far behind?

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

April 2008

Round Table Business

Ron Rhein called the March 11, 2008, meeting to order at 6:30 P.M. opening with the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. Ron informed those in attendance of the death of Doris M. Reaser-Yoder, a former member who had met her husband, William E. Yoder, at the Round Table. We are keeping her family in our thoughts at this time.

Field Trip Update

Dave Fox informed us that there are currently 42 paid attendees for the May 17, 2008, field trip to West Point, and another 7 who are probable. The bus has a 54-person capacity. He urged anyone interested in a seat to contact him ASAP. Send a check for \$80 payable to the First Defenders CW Round Table to Dave at 577 Cedar Hill Road, Birdsboro, PA 19508. You may call Dave at 610.582.9245 with questions or concerns. Be sure to include your meal choice(s) when you send your check. You must choose between prime rib and chicken cordon bleu. The bus will be leaving Kutztown at 7:00 A.M. and returning at approximately 10:00 P.M. on May 17. The trip will be opened to non-members in order to fill it if not enough members commit to it. So, do not delay if you are serious about attending.

Treasurer's Report

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report beginning with a balance of \$3,959.92 from January 8, 2008. There was no February meeting which accounts for the January date. Receipts from the January meeting totaled \$4,838.92. Expenses from the meeting amounted to \$731.16 leaving a balance of \$4,107.76. Preservation funds stand at \$714.00 at the beginning of the March meeting.

Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate submitted the following report:

We raised a total of \$115.00 for battlefield preservation at the March meeting. Even though we had to cancel the February meeting, I am sure we will have \$1,000.00 to donate to the field or fields of our choice at the end of this season. The members continue to donate books for our raffle and, of course, that keeps our costs down. Thanks to all of you who have donated in one way or another throughout the months.

As I said during the meeting, I want to give up the position of program director and made the announcement in time for someone to consider taking it over. Actually, there are four programs already in place for the 2008-2009 year, and I have the names and addresses of a number of potential speakers. Our own members volunteer so the new director can be reasonably assured of much help and support.

Finally, I always have a few topics that I can deliver on short notice. That idea came to me upon taking on the job of director after Rich Kennedy had done so well in that position. It came in handy when, at the last minute, Dave Valuska could not make it, and I filled in with the talk on the Trent Affair.

New Business

Ron Rhein reiterated the need for someone to assume the program director's position for next year. He asked that we all think about taking a turn on the Board of Directors in one capacity or other. Elections will be held during the May 2008 meeting for the 2008-2009 year.

As Tom indicated in his report, several programs are already in place for next season. Ron gave us a rundown of these. Mike and Ron's presentation on the Battle of Stone's River that had been scheduled for February will now occur in October. Renowned writer, Jeffrey Wert, has recently published a book about Jeb Stuart and will be making a presentation for us. The Christmas Round Table will feature a Celtic Christmas by Ken Purcell who performed for the Round Table several years ago and was well-received. Check for information about Ken at his website:

www.kenpurcellmusic.com. And, January, as always, will be a true round-table discussion among members with the topic yet to be chosen.

Ron welcomed guests Claudia and Bill Cariss of Narvon, PA, who learned of our round table through Dave Fox and the Exeter Library's Civil War book group. Also joining us for the first time were Kathy and Dana Little, guests of Dave Lightcap and Dave Herbst. We want to warmly welcome these guests and urge them to join us as members during September's membership drive. We hope to see you again in April!

Mike Gabriel, who could not be with us, sent word of a Civil War living history program, Lehigh Valley Civil War Days, being held June 13-15, 2008, at Camp Geiger, Allentown. You can get details at www.campgeiger.org.

Ed's Artifacts

In anticipation of Dave Unger's program, Ed Ewing brought two cavalry sabers to show us. The first was a Model 1840 which was used by Nathan Bedford Forrest and was affectionately known as "Ol' Wrist Breaker" by those who used it. Troopers liked these sabers of French design but found them to be quite heavy. For anyone interested in collecting them, Ed reported that the blade and scabbard should be in good condition and inspection marks should be clear. Additionally, the hilt should be manicured.

The second saber that Ed brought was the Model 1860 saber which was lighter in weight by 1 pound and 1 ounce. It was the most common saber of its day. 10,000 were manufactured in 1864 alone by Ames. This particular model was in use until 1902. The cost on delivery was \$7.00 per saber!

March Program: "The Wizard of the South", Nathan Bedford Forrest

Round Table member Dave Unger made a comprehensive presentation of the life and military exploits of Nathan Bedford Forrest. He supplemented his program with quotes, a timeline, and transparencies to walk us through the life and times of this fascinating Confederate. Forrest was the only Civil War soldier to begin service as a private and leave the war as a lieutenant general.

Forrest (b. 1821) was the eldest of 11 children and, subsequently, took over the responsibility for his family when his father died; Forrest was 16 at the time and had little schooling. He was a poor reader, writer, and speaker having only about 6 months of formal schooling. He was, however, an astute businessman and fierce fighter as we all know.

His first engagement was in Kentucky at Sacramento. His superiors noticed his fighting abilities immediately. He fought dismounted and used flanking moves. While the morale of his men soared, some worried about his recklessness. In any event, he was on his way to be engaged in just about every major battle in the Western theater of the Civil War. He had a quick temper and often found himself fighting with other generals of the Confederacy, particularly Braxton Bragg.

Forrest surrendered his command on the same day that Richmond fell, April 2, 1865. On May 9, 1865, he bid farewell to his troops with a conciliatory farewell address. During the war, he had 29 horses shot from under him. He had been a slave trader, leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and was dogged by the Fort Pillow massacre for his remaining life.

Dave gave us quotes about and by Forrest. Here are two that seem to sum up this fascinating man:

Forrest to Gen. Braxton Bragg: "You have played the part of a damn scoundrel, and are a coward, and if you were any part of a man, I would slap your jaws and force you to resent it...I say to you that if you ever again try to interfere with me or cross my path, it will be at the peril of your life."

When asked to name the greatest soldier produced on either side during the war, Robert E. Lee answered, "A man I have never seen, sir. His name is Forrest."

Thanks, Dave, for a great program.

April 8, 2008 Meeting

The Round Table is once again fortunate to have a member presenting the April program. Joe Schaeffer will discuss with us "The Great Locomotive Chase—Andrews' Raiders." During his program, Joe will share with us the connection between Andrews' Raiders and the Medal of Honor. This is a new topic for many of us. Mark your calendars for an evening of fellowship and history for our first spring meeting.

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Boneless Pork Loin with Pineapple Sauce, Grilled Honey Mustard Salmon, and Baked Ziti with Meatballs.** The price is \$19.00 for meals. **Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, March 30, 2008. Please call after 5:00 P.M. and speak clearly.**

May's Meeting

Member Ed Ewing will speak on "The Artillery Corps." I wouldn't be surprised to find Ed had rolled in a battery for our consideration. Bring ear protection.

Editor's Note* If you want to include information, articles, quotes, etc. in the newsletter, be reminded that my e-mail address has changed since the roster of members was published. The correct address is zeibers@comcast.net. You may contact me by phone at 610.678.1168.
Thanks! Linda

The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

May 2008

Round Table Business

Mike Gabriel called the April meeting to order with 53 members and guests in attendance. Following the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer, his first order of business was to welcome Roger Cotterill's friends, Bill & Sharon Walton from Calgary, Alberta. The Waltons have visited with us previously and had just finished a 10-day tour of Civil War Western battlefields. Russ Angstadt introduced his guests, Bob and Kay Angstadt, who have recently relocated from Williamsport to Wernersville. We hope to see these friendly faces at future round table meetings.

Mike reminded everyone that the May meeting includes election of new officers. A new program chairman is needed, and, any interested person should be aware that about half of next season's programs are already in place and that there is plenty of help in this endeavor. Contact Mike Gabriel if you are interested in serving in any capacity.

Field Trip Update

Dave Fox shared the most up-to-date information regarding the May 17th field trip to West Point. He has three seats left. Anyone who has not committed his/her intentions needs to do so immediately. Dave and Roger distributed trip itineraries which also have directions to the **BEEKEY** Parking lot **[NOTE THE CHANGE FROM LYTLE]** in Kutztown from where the trip departs at 7:00 A.M. This information is also attached to this newsletter for anyone who may have missed the April meeting. Dave announced that he will need every traveler's full name and date of birth prior to the 17th so make sure that you have forwarded this information to Dave at 610.582.9245 if you have not done so. You will also need to take a photo ID along to West Point.

Treasurer's Report

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report beginning with a balance of \$4,107.76 as of March 11, 2008. Receipts from the March meeting totaled \$8,570.76. Expenses from the meeting amounted to \$2,382.55 leaving a balance of \$6,188.21. Preservation funds stood at \$829 at the beginning of the April meeting.

Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate reports the following:

We need a good turnout at our final meeting in May to put us well over the top in raising our preservation money. After the April meeting, we are below the \$1,000 amount that we try to raise annually. With the money that we raised in April, we stand at \$946.00. This includes the money from the ticket sales and the money donated in the name of Tony Reilly. We are going to donate our funds in his name this year.

Remember that next month we vote on our choice or choices of recipients of our funds. Some candidates suggested are the Slaughter Pen at Fredericksburg, Glendale or Frayser's Farm outside of Richmond, and Brandy Station where Pennsylvania cavalry were engaged. Come out, donate, and vote for your choice. Make this another year to be proud of in our on-going support of battlefield preservation.

Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing brought canteens for our consideration at the April meeting. One was an 1858, 3-pint canteen that belonged to Pvt. Albert Barlow, a New York soldier in the 11th Corps. The government had 700,000 in storage by the end of the war and issued them to US soldiers up to 1926 in the Philippines. Soldiers often carved their names and units on the rims of them since pewter is soft and could be easily "engraved". Soldiers often had two canteens—one for water and the other for applejack. As with most Civil War artifacts, Ed reported that Confederate canteens are rare.

April Program: The Great Locomotive Chase—Andrews' Raiders

Round Table member Joe Schaeffer spoke of civilian leader James Andrews' plan to hijack a train near Atlanta and take it north destroying railroad bridges along the way to Chattanooga. If the raid had been successful, Chattanooga would have been cut off leaving it ripe for capture by General Mitchel. The raid had been scheduled to begin on April 7, 1862, but rain delayed it; it was moved back to April 12th. The raiders had been told to enlist and then desert should they be caught since, in all likelihood, they would have been executed.

The train that was stolen at Marietta, GA, was pulled by the engine known as The General. It had been built in Patterson, NJ, and was wood-burning. It pulled freight, passengers, and a mail car and could travel 35 miles on one cord of wood. The trip from Atlanta to Chattanooga would require 5 cords as well as water. James Andrews, wearing a stovepipe hat like Lincoln's, boarded the train in Marietta. The 20-24 raiders entered a boxcar boldly. Two-and-a-half miles out of town, Andrews stopped the train to cut telegraph lines.

Andrews' first trouble occurred in Kingston, GA, where the train had to wait over an hour for 3 trains to pass. At this point, Andrews did not know that he was being chased. He first became aware of pursuit at Adairsville when he heard a train whistle. The other engine used in the chase was The Texas which, unfortunately, was headed in the wrong direction on the track, but it was full of wood and water. Andrews had been unable to get wood and water for the General since he kept hearing pursuers and wouldn't risk stopping. The Texas was driven in reverse for the remainder of the chase having no chance to turn around.

The General slowed down two miles north of Ringgold...out of steam. The raiders ran into the woods to escape. It took the Confederates two weeks to find all of the raiders. They were thrown into the old slave jail and put on a starvation diet. General Mitchel was waiting for them, but they never showed up. James Andrews was charged with spying and treason. He was found guilty and sentenced to hang in Atlanta. He was executed on June 7, 1862. In Knoxville, seven raiders asked for a soldier's death of firing squad, but they were hanged. At this point, there were 14 surviving raiders, and they asked Jefferson Davis for mercy.

By November, the prisoners were treated better and were exchanged in 1863. Secretary Stanton had heard about them. Medals of Honor were awarded to eight survivors. In 1866, the bodies of seven who had been hanged were re-interred in the National Cemetery in Chattanooga. Andrews was also re-interred there. The General barely survived the war. In 1962, The General went on a US tour which ended at the New York World's Fair in 1964. Chattanooga, TN, and the state of Georgia disputed possession of the engine. The courts eventually ruled in favor of Georgia, and it now resides in Kennesaw, originally Big Shanty, a locale significant in the chase.

Joe's presentation was comprehensive in scope and provided information about the evolution of the Medal of Honor. He recommends a film made by Disney on the same subject titled *The Great Locomotive Chase*. While it may not be completely historically accurate, it is a fine film nonetheless. All express gratitude for this fascinating presentation.

May 13, 2008 Meeting

The final meeting of this season will feature round table member Ed Ewing speaking on the topic of "The Artillery Corps". Dinner selections for the meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast, Broiled Haddock in garlic clam sauce, and Stuffed Shells with spinach tomato cream sauce.** The price is \$19.00 for meals. **Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, May 5, 2008. Please call after 5:00 P.M. and speak clearly.**

Editor's Note* I have several trips planned beginning May 2, 2008. I will be putting the September newsletter together during the first week of July. If anyone has anything for inclusion in that newsletter, please be sure that you have the information to me prior to that week. Thanks. Linda Zeiber

THE FIRST DEFENDERS CWRT FIELD TRIP WEST POINT

SATURDAY MAY 17, 2008

The trip itinerary outline is:

Depart by bus Kutztown University's Beekey Hall parking lot.	7:00 a.m.
Arrive Visitor's Center West Point	10:00 a.m.
Visitor Center/Museum	10:00 a.m. to Noon
Free time/lunch (individual expense) West Point	Noon to 1:15 p.m.
Guided tour West Point Academy. Guide – Major Ray Kimball	1:15 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Relax/Bar Thayer Hotel	5:00 p.m. to 5:15 p.m.
Dinner and speaker	5:15 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
Leave West Point around	7:30 p.m.
Arrive back at Kutztown University's Beekey Hall parking lot around	10:30 p.m.

Directions to K.U.'s Beekey Hall parking lot:

Travel along Main Street in Kutztown to College Boulevard (It is named Normal Avenue on the opposite side of West Main street). If traveling from Reading turn LEFT onto College Boulevard. After about 2/10 mile you will be passing the Kutztown Fairgrounds on the right, on the left will be Beekey Hall parking lot. If you're lost at the last minute when following these instructions, PANIC then call Roger's cell 570- 401-2891 or Dave's (610) 223-9976, who will try not to panic when their cell phone rings, and they will try to put you back on track.

**NOTE THAT THE PARKING AREA HAS BEEN
CHANGED FROM LYTLE LOT TO BEEKEY.**