

Campaign  
Sept 2008 - May 2009 (12)

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

September 2008

**Welcome to a new campaign of history and fellowship.  
Critically acclaimed Civil War writer and historian, Jeffery  
Wert, will be the first speaker of the season.**

## Round Table Business

Secretary Richard Kennedy called the May meeting to order with 56 members and guests in attendance. Dave Fox announced that there were 52 people traveling to West Point for the field trip. Since the newsletter editor was absent from this meeting, I would like to thank Tom Tate and Richard Kennedy for forwarding pertinent information.

During the annual election of officers, Barbara Shafer and Errol Steffy were elected to take over programming for this year's meetings. All other current board members were retained since there were no challenges. A board meeting was held June 11, 2008, at Whispering Springs Restaurant in Kutztown. The Board wants to remind everyone that we are constantly facing attrition of members for various reasons. All members are urged to invite guests who may become members of our round table.

## Treasurer's Report

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report beginning with a balance of \$6,188.21 as of May 13, 2008. Receipts from the April meeting totaled \$7,952.21 Expenses from the meeting amounted to \$1,075.89 leaving a balance of \$6,876.32. Preservation funds stood at \$946.00 at the end of the meeting.

## Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate reported the following:

We raised \$304.00 for preservation at the May meeting. Dr. & Barbara Lord sent Arlan a check for \$100 in memory of Mary Lou Rhein's mother who had recently passed away. We sold \$163.00 worth of raffle tickets, and there was another \$32.00 given in memory of Tony. This put our preservation money at \$1250.00. The membership voted to send \$1500.00 (the difference to be made up from the general treasury) to Civil War Preservation Trust in the name of Anthony Reilly and earmarked \$500.00 each to Glendale, the Slaughter Pen, and Brandy Station.

I received many books for next year's raffles. Since our inception, we have donated \$15,140 to preservation which I am sure is a record for a group of our size.

## **Preservation update since May's meeting**

The Richmond Battlefield Association bought eleven acres at Cold Harbor for \$245,000. Bob Krick said, "In America's Civil War, a purchase like this usually causes others to sell to preservation groups." The purchase is an important part of the Cold Harbor Battlefield, and Pennsylvania regiments fought there. All of us should think about whether or not the round table should send some money to the Richmond BFA. The issue will be addressed at the September meeting.

## **May Program: The Artillery Corps**

Ed Ewing was the final speaker for last season's campaign. It has been reported that he gave a fine presentation on the Artillery Corps and brought many artifacts as well.

Editor's note\* I would like to inform the membership that it is my intention for this season's newsletter to scale back the synopses that I have done in the past season's newsletters. I find that I am unable to enjoy the presentations because of taking copious notes in order to report on them. Those in attendance certainly do not need a retelling, and those who missed the meeting do not receive enough information to serve as an adequate replacement for not having attended. Should any of our members who make presentations like to give me a synopsis of his or her program, I would be more than happy to include it in the newsletter.

## **Field Trip to West Point, NY, May 17, 2008**

Tom Tate sent his observations following the field trip to West Point. He wrote the following:

While Rich and Cathie Kennedy were on the trip, the cowbell and other antics were missing but well-remembered from other trips. Still we had a very fine trip to West Point. I am glad that it was so successful because of all the efforts of Dave Fox and Roger Cotterill. We had beautiful weather, although it rained on the way home.

Our guide, Major Ray Kimball, did an excellent job, and the evening program and dinner were fine as well. I saw some things that I had not seen before in my visits to West Point, and I learned some new things as well.

Roger Cotterill filed the following report about West Point Military Academy field trip:

Despite the threat of wet weather, the sun cooperated, and we had a glorious day. We arrived on schedule at the West Point Visitor Center at 10:30 a.m. which gave us time to investigate it. The museum contained very interesting collections and artifacts spanning all areas and aspects of military history, including the Civil War.

We were on our own for lunch which gave an opportunity to pick a place to eat of our liking and strike up conversations, if we wished, with cadets who were also getting a bite while in town from the Military Academy. They seemed happy with life at West Point and were quite open in talking about their army training. Approximately 1,000 cadets attend West Point each year.

The afternoon was particularly enjoyable with Major Ray Kimball giving a warm welcome to his Reading area friends. He outlined some of the history of West Point and answered questions freely and clearly, although he did mumble his answer when asked who had won the most football games between Army and Navy over the years.

The tour of the academy was nicely balanced between being bussed to points of interest and taking optional walks on route. The tour spots included the Michie Football Stadium (capacity 40,000), the American Soldier statue, the Air Cadet monument, the New Cadet Chapel which is a fine large, Gothic-style stone building, the Old Cadet Chapel which is steeped in history, and the adjoining Old Cemetery which included Molly Pitcher's grave, a stop at an overview of the Hudson River where Major Kimball gave us a talk on the strategic use of a heavy chain across the river to deter British warships from moving up the river during the Revolutionary War, a walk through the barracks/academy area, briefs on each statue that we walked to—Thayer, General MacArthur, General Washington, General Eisenhower, and General Patton. We did not make it to the historic Fort Putnam since heavy rains had made the road to it impassable.

We finally wound up at the Thayer Hotel in time for dinner; the view overlooking the Hudson River from the Thayer Hotel restaurant was spectacular. We were given an excellent dinner talk by Major Matt Hardman on his research on the Second Massachusetts Infantry during the Civil War. He chose this topic because he wanted to reflect the similarity between a mix of untrained men, as exemplified by the Second Massachusetts and a modern fighting force, when brought together and seasoned while fighting for a common cause developing into one very strong unit that is bonded together like a family.

The regiment was formed in May 1861 with recruits from a wide spectrum of Bostonians. The regiment grew in professionalism from campaigns early in the war to its final mustering out of service in July of 1865. The battles covered included Winchester, Cedar Mountain, Antietam, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, the Atlanta and Savannah campaigns, and the Carolinas. The letters and diaries of long-serving individual soldiers showed their passion for the survival of their regiment above all else; they wanted its success to show that comrades' sacrifices were not for nothing. The seasoned soldiers had little time for the later recruits as they were seen as opportunists as the outcome of the war was pretty well decided by then. The later recruits were paid a \$300 bounty compared to the \$30 that the original volunteers received.

Major Kimball and Major Hardman gave us a focused, educational, and enjoyable day. On May 17, 2008, they both served the West Point Academy well.

### **Quotable**

Despite Roger's lengthy report on the field trip, he still had enough steam left to send a quote:

Joking on the battlefield:

General Howard's right arm was shattered by a ball in a battle in 1862 during the campaign against Richmond, and it was amputated above the elbow. While being borne on a litter, he met General Kearney who had lost his left arm in Mexico. "I want to make a bargain with you, General," said Howard, "that hereafter we buy our gloves together."

From member Mike Straus, enjoy the following quotes:

Brig. General Cavier Grover lost nearly 500 men charging an unfinished railroad cut at Second Manassas. The forces sometimes met face to face, and the bayonet and sword—weapons that do not pierce soldiers in nine-tenths of the battles that are fought—were used with deadly effect in several instances. A corporal exclaimed in the din of this combat, "dish ish no place for de mens" and fled to the rear with the speed of the mythical "Flying Dutchman."

Still, in another company of the 11<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts, a son was killed by the side of his father who continued to perform his duty with the firmness of a stoic and remarked to his amazed comrades in a tone which showed how a strong patriotic ardor can triumph over the deepest emotion of affection. "I had rather see him shot dead as he was, than see him run away."

Doesn't this remind us of the countless soldiers who retreated from a battlefield walking backwards rather than risk the shame of being shot in the back!

And, finally, from Linda Zeiber, a quote by my favorite "writing" general, J. Lawrence Chamberlain who was musing on the wound that he received at Petersburg nearly half a century after the incident, and the fact that he lay and bled on Virginia soil for almost an hour before receiving treatment:

"I am not of Virginia blood; she is of mine."

### **September Trivia from Barbara Shafer:**

1. What does ALBC stand for?
2. Who were Moscow, Decatur, and Bayard?
3. Who were Virginia and Highfly?

### **September 9, 2008 Meeting**

Jeffrey D. Wert, renowned Civil War writer, is our first speaker of this season. He will discuss his new book, *Cavalryman of the Lost Cause: A Biography of JEB Stuart*. Jeff will focus on Stuart's Confederate career, particularly on his attributes as a cavalry commander and his controversial "ride" during the Gettysburg Campaign. Jeff is the author of eight books about the Civil War, including *The Sword of Lincoln* (2005), the first authoritative single-volume history of the Army of the Potomac in years. His writing has appeared in such publications as *The Civil War Times Illustrated* and *Blue and Gray*. He lives in Centre Hall, PA.

Jeff will have 20-30 copies of his new book, hot off the presses, and a number of hardback copies of *Sword of Lincoln*. The Stuart book can be purchased for \$30 and *Sword of Lincoln* for \$20, and Jeff accepts checks. He has also graciously offered to sign any other of his books that members would like to bring.

It is indeed an honor and privilege to have the opportunity to hear him speak. You do not want to miss this meeting.

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast, Grilled 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, September 1, 2008. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.

### Coming in October—

Our 'dynamic duo', Mike Gabriel and Ron Rhein, have been rescheduled from last February. Their topic for the evening is the Battle of Stone's River. They always inspire us so mark your calendar now for October 14, 2008. Good seats are still available!

### 2007-2008 Schedule

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

September 9: Jeffrey Wert, "Cavalryman of the Lost Cause, JEB Stuart"

October 14: Ron Rhein and Mike Gabriel, "The Battle of Stones River"

November 11: Roy Gehris, "Kutztown Cavalrymen"

December 9: Christmas Party featuring the music of the Ken Purcell Family

January 13, 2009: Round Table Open Discussion (topic to be selected)

February 10: TBA

March 10: TBA



April 14: TBA

May 12: TBA

### **Membership Renewal**

It's time to reenlist for another campaign with the First Defenders. Please turn in the enclosed renewal form by the October 14 meeting. The renewal fee is \$20.

You can drop them off at the meetings or send them to Pat Christ, 332 West Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530.

### **An Announcement from Mike and Ron**

Ron and I have decided that we are stepping down as the First Defender's president and vice president at the end of this campaign in May 2009. It has been our pleasure to serve the round table and its members but following the example of President James Polk have decided that four years is enough. We'd like to thank the board for their hard work and able assistance. We also want to thank the members. The First Defenders have done an amazing job in promoting interest in the Civil War and preserving Civil War battlefields. This would not have been possible without you.

Thanks,  
Mike and Ron

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

October 2008



## **Round Table Business**

President Mike Gabriel called to order the September meeting beginning the round table's 11<sup>th</sup> season. Sixty-eight members and guests were in attendance. He introduced several guests for the evening's program. Mike clarified an error in May's newsletter concerning a contribution made in memory of Ron Rhein's stepmother who had died. The newsletter article mistakenly referred to Ron's mother rather than his stepmother.

### **Secretary's Report**

Richard Kennedy, the board's recording secretary, read minutes from the June 11<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors meeting at Whispering Springs in Kutztown. Included in the minutes were the possibility of a 2009 field trip to Fredericksburg, MD's Civil War Museum of Medicine as well as the Monocacy Battlefield located nearby. Richard also suggested that members begin wearing their round table shirts in our communities as advertising for our organization. There was an inquiry about the availability of shirts from the membership. See the section on page 2 for more information about obtaining shirts and hats. The board is also looking for a webmaster to design a web page for the round table.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report which began with a balance from May 13, 2008, of \$6,876.32. Receipts from the May meeting totaled \$1,597.00 with expenses from the meeting totaling \$5,415.55 leaving a balance of \$3,057.77 as of September 9, 2008. He reported a trip profit of \$299.90 as well as no funds remaining in the preservation fund.

### **Membership Report**

**Membership Chair Pat Christ reported that 65 members have renewed memberships for the new season. She asks that all those who have not yet renewed their memberships to please mail them to her at 332 W. Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530, since she will not be attending the October meeting.** At this time, there is no waiting list to join so anyone who would like to enlist a new member is welcome to do so. Membership dues remain at \$20.00 a year. Checks should be made payable to The First Defenders CWRT in that amount.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate began his report by announcing his pride in the money that our round table has sent over the past 11 years for battlefield preservation. We have donated \$15,850 to various sites around the country. He called attention to the plight of the Richmond Battlefield Association that is trying to buy land around Glendale (Cold Harbor) in the amount of \$245,000. The state of Virginia is willing to contribute some money as well. He urges everyone to consider this donation to help out. He feels we need to donate in November or December at the latest.

Tom reported the following:

Over all we raised \$168.00 on our kickoff September meeting for the 2008-09 campaign. This was through ticket sales and donations. While all this money goes into the preservation fund, some folks are continuing to donate their change from the dinner meal price to the Tony Reilly fund. As best as I can identify this specific donation, I will keep a separate total going. If members are contributing money in Tony's memory, it

seems proper to know the amount contributed if we decide to once again make a donation in his name. I think the amount we raised this month is commendable indeed.

Thanks also for the donations of books for the raffle. Donated books keep our expenses low. Thanks, again, for your financial support for battlefield preservation.

### **Field Trips**

Dave Fox thanked the membership for its support and participation in May's field trip to West Point. He announced that Major Kimball's wife is being deployed to Iraq and mentioned that Ray was a great host for the trip. Since he would accept no remuneration for his guiding, a contribution of \$100 was made to the Army Emergency Medical Relief Fund. Dave read a letter from that organization thanking the round table for its donation. A day trip to the Civil War Museum of Medicine in Frederick, MD, is under consideration at this point for the spring. It would also include a stop at the Monocacy Battlefield.

### **Miscellaneous**

Joe Schaeffer announced that he had spoken to member Dick Auman's wife. She reports that Dick has responded well to cancer treatment. The Aumans currently reside in North Carolina.

Barb Shafer quizzed everyone with three questions that had been in September's newsletter, but apparently no one had taken the time to study during the summer break. She stumped most of us. We are not likely to forget JEB Stuart's horses in a hurry! (Remember Old Baldy?)

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed shared with us a variety of Civil War photographs featuring married couples, one of whom had lived on Noble Street in Kutztown. One particularly large photo had probably been taken from a carte de visite because of its unusual size. We look forward to the next installment of photos. Thanks, Ed.

### **Round Table Logo Shirts and Hats**

Anyone genuinely interested in First Defenders shirt purchases should see Rich Kennedy at the October meeting, or by phone if unable to attend the meeting. 610.779.6923. If there is enough interest, I will order more. They should still be \$25.00 for the shirts. We have hats...somewhere.

### **September's Program: Jeffry Wert, "Cavalryman of the Lost Cause, JEB Stuart"**

If was a true pleasure to have Jeffry Wert, a retired history teacher, kick off our 11<sup>th</sup> year. One simply cannot browse the history sections of bookstores nor read Civil War periodicals without running into Jeffry's writing. His books are critically acclaimed and reviewed by the likes of Gary Gallagher and James McPherson. For those who have not read any of his works, his style is easy and quite readable for history experts and neophytes alike.

Jeffry began his presentation with praise for the round table's preservation contributions over the years. He also explained that ours was the first JEB Stuart talk that he had given to a round table since publishing his most recent book, Cavalryman of the Lost Cause. Jeffry took us through the life and military career of this truly professional soldier who was devoted to "the cause." He ended his presentation about Stuart with the thought that the Confederacy needed a knight and JEB Stuart wanted to be, and indeed was, that knight.



September Trivia - What does ALBC stand for? An answer from the table was Always Love Berks County

### October Trivia

1. General Roscrans reported a Union victory at Stone's River, Tennessee, how did his casualties compare with those of the Confederates?
2. Of the major battles of the Civil War, what battle had the highest percentage of casualties on both sides?
3. What name does the South call the Battle of Stone's River?

If you, as a member, would like to present a topic at our Roundtable or if you know of someone to speak at our meeting, please contact Errol Steffy 610-927-4379 or Barbara Shafer 484-336-8995

### October's Program: Ron Rhein and Mike Gabriel, "The Battle of Stones River"

Winter weather last season forced the postponement of Ron and Mike's presentation on the Battle of Stones River. We always look forward to learning from our resident Western Theater gurus. Mark your calendar now for the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Good seating is still available.

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled boneless pork loin with pineapple sauce, Broiled haddock in garlic clam stock, and Stuffed shells with spinach tomato cream sauce.**

**The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservations and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, October 6, 2008. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. Note that the meal price has changed since our first meeting.**

\*November 11: Roy Gehris, "Kutztown Cavalrymen"

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610-678-1168 or [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

### FIRST DEFENDERS CWRT MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership payment of \$20 is due by the October 14, 2008 meeting. The check should be made payable to The First Defenders CWRT and mailed to:**

Pat Christ  
332 West Main Street  
Kutztown, PA 19530

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**November 2008**



## **Round Table Business**

Secretary Richard Kennedy called to order the October meeting of the First Defenders CW Round Table followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a prayer. Sixty-seven members and guests were in attendance. He introduced several guests and new members present for the evening's program and welcomed all.

Richard reported that there has been no interest shown in ordering new shirts thus far. He reiterated that 12 shirt orders are needed to proceed. Shirts would cost \$25 each. He shared information about a North Jersey round table which he attended in Morristown and cited differences between that one and ours.

Dave Fox gave a trip update for June 6, 2009. This one-day trip features a tour of the Monocacy Battlefield and the Civil War Museum of Medicine in Frederick, MD. Each person will have lunch on his/her own in any one of a variety of restaurants in Frederick. The Barbara Fritchie House is nearby and could be visited if desired. An evening banquet at the Carriage House in Emmitsburg is scheduled with Gail Stevens speaking. Gail has recently completed a manuscript which is being published next year on the life of General Lew Wallace.

Tom Tate suggested that the membership consider a topic for a presentation based on a war other than the Civil War. He gave an example of the Mexican War as a possibility. Members should consider this idea and offer suggestions at future meetings.

Topics for January's round table discussion are still being considered. Mike Gabriel suggested several including "Was the Civil War the first modern war or the last Napoleonic war?" and "The Top Ten Union Generals?" Joe Schaeffer suggested something related to Abraham Lincoln since 2009 is the bicentennial year of his birth.

Arlan Christ announced that the Kutztown Historical Society is going to be sponsoring an exhibit of historical quilts that belong to him and Pat in May of 2009. He will have more details in the future.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report which began with a balance from September 9, 2008, of \$3,057.77. Receipts from the October meeting totaled \$2,725.00 with expenses from the meeting totaling \$1,813.42 leaving a balance of \$3,969.35 as of October 10, 2008. He reported \$170.00 in the preservation fund.

### **Membership Report**

Membership Chair Pat Christ reported through Arlan that 90 members have renewed memberships for the new season while 9 remain unpaid. She asks that all those who have not yet renewed their memberships to please mail them to her at 332 W. Main Street, Kutztown, PA 19530. Membership dues remain at \$20.00 a year. Checks should be made payable to The First Defenders CWRT in that amount.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom reported the following:

Ticket purchases and donations continue to come in at record numbers. We raised another \$184.00 for preservation at our October meeting. While I was not aware of any really hot issues in preservation this past month, Richmond Battlefield Association continues to work to raise money for eleven acres that they want to obtain at Cold Harbor.

The members continue to donate books as well as purchase raffle tickets. I would have been overwhelmed with the volume of books that were donated this past month. I actually have no place for them all. I hope I did not offend any of the donors by my hasty decision to allow members to borrow some of them. Over this month, I will try to find some place to store them. I don't want to put them in my cellar. Maybe I can put my clothes in the cellar and store the books in my clothes closet! Seriously, though, thanks for your donations which keep our cost low.

Editor's note: Tom has been collecting money to donate specifically in memory of Tony Reilly for over a year now. None of us will ever forget Tony, but it is time to conclude collecting separately for our preservation funds. November's meeting will be your last opportunity to direct your money to Tony's memory. Obviously, anyone is welcome to send money directly to the battlefield of your specific interest in the future in Tony's memory. The amount of money contributed over the past year speaks volumes for just how much Tony meant to the Round Table.

### **Classified**

Rich Kennedy's son has complimentary passes available for Robert Lincoln's estate "Hildene" in Manchester, Vermont. If anyone is going to be in that area in the near future, it is well worth the tour. See Rich at the November meeting, or call 610.779.6923.

### **Our Resident Author**

Tom Tate has published a new book, General James Wolfe Ripley, Chief of Ordnance: Answers to His Critics. In this book, published by Booksurge, Tom argues that Ripley was correct in not trying to arm the Union Army with a breech-loading rifle because he couldn't reliably provide them in large enough numbers. There were also problems with supplying troops with proper munitions, etc. Ripley didn't think the Union could develop and implement all this in a short period of time. Many historians have criticized Ripley for this decision, but Tom argues that they're wrong and don't understand the time and complexities that would've been involved. Tom says that Ripley's job was to provide the Union large numbers of reliable weapons in as short a time as possible, and that's what he did. This book is available on Amazon.com.

Congratulations, Tom. We look forward to reading your latest endeavor.

### **Programs**

Barbara Shafer went over the trivia questions for October. After a bleak showing last month, Jim Reilly was able to answer all of the questions. Barbara surprised everyone with an announcement that she is working on getting Ed Bearss as a speaker for the December 2009 meeting. Barbara offers the following trivia questions for your consideration:

#### **November Trivia**

1. Who will be the featured speaker at the 145<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Gettysburg Address held in Gettysburg?
2. What battle was the #1 costliest and bloodiest of the Civil War?
3. Who invited Abraham Lincoln to speak in Gettysburg on November 19, 1863?

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed shared with us 2 plates found at Stone's River as well as 3 Austrian weapons which he described with a 4-letter word. Ed explained that both the Union and the Confederacy sent buying expeditions to Europe for weapons. Ed's guns included an 1849 Light Infantry Garibaldi, a 2<sup>nd</sup> class weapon which was rifled and 69 caliber; an 1842 cavalry carbine which was obsolete by the time of the Civil War, many of which were issued to cavalry at Stone's River; and a Model 1849, a long-range infantry rifle. He described all of these weapons as being of poor quality and examples of the procurement nightmare.

### **October's Presentation**

After detailed introduction, Mike Gabriel and Ron Rhein took us west once again with their presentation, The Battle of Stone's River. Ron described the conflict as the sequel to the Battle of Perryville. In addition to their telling the story of the battle as it unfolded, we learned of the consequences of a variety of commanders and their abject failures and gutsy successes. We are all grateful for this excellent presentation and look forward to the western installment next season.

### **An Excerpt from The National Civil War Museum Publication**

By Maria C. Reichenbach

RT member Bob Sharets shared his fall copy of the Ringgold Band News newsletter with me in September. We both think that you may enjoy the following part of an article found therein.

As many of you know, one of the previous names of the Ringgold Band was the Ringgold Light Artillery Brass Band. The Ringgold Light Artillery was a local military group formed in Reading in November 1849 and led by James McKnight. McKnight was a strong supporter of the band and later became its first honorary lifetime member. The firing upon Fort Sumter, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861, signaled the beginning of the Civil War and three days later, President Abraham Lincoln issued a call for troops. The Ringgold Light Artillery responded to the call on April 16 and left immediately for Harrisburg, eventually reaching Washington, DC on April 18, 1861. This fast response to Lincoln's call earned the artillery, along with four other companies, the title of First Defenders. The other companies were the Logan Guards of Lewistown, the Washington Artillerists of Pottsville, the National Light Infantry also of Pottsville, and the Allen Infantry of Allentown. A statue in City Park in Reading honors all of these First Defenders.

The Ringgold Band wanted to do its part in the war effort and on May 4, 1861, accepted a call as a regimental band. Sixteen men arrived in Washington on May 16 and became known as the Regimental Band for the Twenty-Fifth Regiment of Pennsylvania Volunteers. This ensemble gave three months of service from April to July 1861. These men were also the Regimental Band for the Eighty-Eighth Regiment from August 1861 to June 1862. Unfortunately not much was written about the Ringgold Band when it was in the Civil War. Regimental bands were usually an important part of the unit. A band's main job was to provide music for parading but it also served as entertainment and held concerts when possible. Programs consisted of marches, popular songs, and quicksteps. If engaged in battle, musicians served as medics...

### **Quotable**

Barbara Shafer sends the following quote:

"The cavalry constitute the eyes and ears of the army. The safety of the entire command depends upon their vigilance and the faithfulness of their reports."

—Lt. Gen. Daniel H. Hill to his troops on February 25, 1863. (He should have sent a carbon copy to Gen. Stuart!)

From Linda Zeiber:

"Great crises in human affairs call out the great in men. But true greatness is not in nor of the single self; it is of that larger personality, that shared and sharing life with others, in which, each giving of his best for their betterment, we are greater than ourselves; and self-surrender for the sake of that great belonging, is the true nobility."

--Joshua L. Chamberlain speaking on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, 1909 (He rivals Lincoln himself in eloquence.)

### **November 11, 2008 Meeting: Roy Gehris will speak about "Kutztown Cavalrymen"**

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Baked Ham Steak with grape glaze; Grilled Honey Mustard Salmon; Baked Wild Mushroom Ziti**. The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservations and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, November 3, 2008. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. Note that the meal price has changed since our first meeting.

### **2008-2009 Schedule Update**

December 9:	Christmas Party featuring the music of the Ken Purcell Family
January 13, 2009:	Round Table Open Discussion (topic to be determined)
February 10:	TBA
March 10:	Tom Tate, "War Generals"
April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of "Isn't This Glorious!", stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and beyond
May 12:	TBA

\* Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610-678-1168 or zeibers@comcast.net



# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**December 2008**



## **Round Table Business**

On Veterans' Day, November 11, 2008, President Mike Gabriel called to order the round table meeting with 61 members and guests in attendance. Dave Fox was asked for any information regarding the **2009 field trip to Frederick, MD, on June 6, 2009**. Dinner for the evening still has not been finalized and will take place in either Thurmont or Emmitsburg, MD, with Gail Stevens as the keynote speaker. Gail has written a biography of General Lew Wallace and will talk to the group about him. Cost for the trip is expected to be \$85-\$90 per person.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ gave his treasurer's report which began with a balance from October 14, 2008, of \$3,969.35. Receipts from the October meeting totaled 1844.00 bringing a new balance of \$5,813.35. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,243.13 leaving a balance of \$4,570.22 as of November 11. The preservation fund balance is currently at \$354.00.

### **Membership Report**

Membership Chair Pat Christ reported that 94 members have renewed memberships for the current season. Two more members are expected to pay dues soon bringing total membership to 96. Tom Hoffman from Hazelton was introduced as a new member.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate reported the following:

We are doing a fine job in raising money for preservation, and it is certainly needed. Here in the East there are three big purchases that preservationists are working to protect. We still need to secure the Glendale site where the Pennsylvania Reserves fought so well. Then there is the Deep Bottom Battlefield nearby. The third area is a parcel at Cold Harbor.

Our funds, thanks to you, now stand at \$470.00. We raised another \$116.00 in November. Thanks for your ticket purchases and your donations of both dollars and books.

### **January Round Table Topic Selected**

After discussion of previously mentioned topics and several new ones, the membership voted to choose "Lincoln and his Top Ten Generals" as the topic for January's round table discussion. It was a good compromise suggested by Ron Rhein that included the top ten Union Generals and added Abraham Lincoln since his bicentennial year will be celebrated in 2009.

### **New Business**

First Defender's logo shirts were again asked about. Richard Kennedy is still waiting for membership interest before ordering new ones. The location of shirts previously ordered is unknown. Bob Grim asked members to begin thinking about replacements for Mike and Ron who will be stepping down from their posts at the end of this season. Roger Cotterill suggested that we submit questions in advance for Ed Bearss presentation next year. Several topics have already been proposed for his visit; these are Vicksburg, Chancellorsville, and the Jackson Valley Campaign.

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### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed shared with us a variety of Civil War items all having a connection to Union cavalry in keeping with the theme of the evening's presentation. He described in detail an 1848 forage cap that had been lost during Farnsworth's charge at Gettysburg. Legend tells that it was "dumb luck that they found it." It is a fascinating story.

### **December Trivia**

Barbara Shafer challenges the membership to be prepared with answers to the following questions in December:



- ❖ During the years of the Civil War, how did Tomas Nast depict Santa Claus?
- ❖ What reason did Southern mothers give to their children why Santa might not visit them during the Civil War?
- ❖ What Christmas gift did General Sherman present to Lincoln in 1864?

### **November's Presentation: Roy Gehris on the Kutztown Cavalry**

Former member Roy Gehris, introduced by Bob Grim, discussed in detail Kutztown's obligation to supply 16 men as replacements for the draft for Berks County in 1864. These replacements became part of the 1<sup>st</sup> PA Cavalry. One of the men, Pvt. Daniel Geiger was Roy's great grandfather whose story led to extensive research into the lives of these men and their fates. The presentation was all the more interesting because of the connections to Kutztown.

### **Quotable**

Barbara Shafer offers the following:

"It is Christmas morning and I hope a happy and merry one for you all, though it looks so stormy for our poor country, one can hardly be in merry humor."

--Robert Gould Shaw while on guard duty near Frederick, MD

Linda Zeiber found the following quote in General Lee and Santa Claus (1867)—

"Please, General Lee, tell us if Santa Claus loves the little Rebel children. We don't think he does. He did not come to the South for four Christmas Eves. Aunt Sarah thinks you did not let him cross the blockade lines. Is that true?"



### **The Seasons of Christmas**

Our modern Christmas practices were already firmly entrenched during the Civil War. Eleanor Custis Lee wrote in her journal in 1883 of the family's tabletop Christmas tree at West Point while her father was superintendent there. President Franklin Pierce set up the first Presidential Christmas tree in the White House in 1856. While tree ornaments would not be mass-produced for a decade after the Civil War, Americans had read the many descriptions of decorations and holiday festivities written in the widely popular works of Charles Dickens, in particular from A Christmas Carol.

By the middle of the Civil War, the postal service was offering free delivery to both manufactured and handmade Christmas cards during the holidays. The financial status of the Victorians determined the quality and quantity of gifts presented, but most all homes were decorated with greenery. Traditional holiday foods were found on dining tables, and children anticipated the presents left on and under the tree by Santa, whose unique Americanization was a gift from Clement Clark Moore in 1844. Of course, political cartoonist Thomas Nast drew Santa for publication in 1862, and the rest is history.


It is difficult to imagine the Christmas season of 1860 for Americans on both sides of the growing conflict with the specter of war on the horizon. Festivities were surely tempered when South Carolina's Governor Pickens announced that his state was to be 'separate, independent, free, and sovereign.' It seemed synonymous to a declaration of war. And, as anticipated, citizen soldiers spent the following Christmas of 1861 away from home and family.

Perhaps the adventure and novelty of the war made that first Christmas more tolerable for the soldiers despite their circumstances. Many diaries and letters home—both North and South—describe good food (either foraged or mailed from home), inordinate amounts of alcohol particularly enjoyed in egg nog, and games and competitions. The most common complaint centered on guard duty. But, by the Christmas of 1862 which was sandwiched between Fredericksburg and Murfreesboro, the tenor of written words had dramatically changed. A soldier from a Wisconsin unit that had fought at Murfreesboro wrote:

"Last night was Christmas Eve. It brought to my mind a thousand recollections of the past. The contrast is great. I sat up late in the evening at the fire...for we were under marching orders for this morning at five o'clock. A grand movement seems to be at hand. About eleven o'clock at night I heard heavy firing in the front. Where will the next Christmas Eve find me?"

The Christmases during the Civil War found the soldiers in winter camp for the most part. It is impossible to imagine the drudgery and boredom and bleak living conditions and how this must have dampened any hope of celebrating the joys of the season. Loneliness and separation only worsened each succeeding year of war.

Soldiers over modern history have suffered the distance from loved ones made acutely painful by the memories of other Christmases. As we find ourselves in the midst of this holiday season, may we take time to remember those of the past as well as the present who have been called to serve our country and find themselves in distant places dreaming of nothing more than "home." Remembering them magnifies our blessings and enhances the true nature of Christmas.

May each and every one of you have a wonderful and blessed holiday season.  —L. Zeiber

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### December's Meeting

December 9<sup>th</sup> features the Round Table Christmas party with the music of the Ken Purcell Family. Leave your thinking caps at home, and come out to get into the holiday spirit with an evening of fun and fellowship.

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast with filling, Grilled Marinated Chicken Romano, and Grilled Strawberry Bourbon Salmon.** The price is now **\$20.00 for meals.** Please call in your reservations and menu selection at **610.683.4384 no later than Monday, December 1, 2008. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly. Note that the meal price has changed since our first meeting.**

### 2008-2009 Schedule Update

January 13, 2009:	Round Table Discussion—Lincoln's Generals
February 10:	Dr. Brian Alnutt—Lincoln
March 10:	Tom Tate, "War Generals"
April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of "Isn't This Glorious!", stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and beyond
May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckenridge

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610-678-1168 or [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**January 2009**



**May Everyone Enjoy a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!**

## **Round Table Business**

On December 9, 2008, at 6:30 p.m., President Mike Gabriel called to order the round table meeting with 52 members and guests in attendance. Following a prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance, Dave Fox was asked for any new information regarding the **2009 field trip to Frederick, MD, on June 6, 2009**. Dave explained that details would be confirmed and itemized during the January meeting. Mike announced that board members would serve as an *ad hoc* nominating committee as we seek replacements for president and vice president at the end of the current season. Any interested persons are urged to speak to any board member.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ's treasurer's report began with a balance from November 11, 2008, of \$4,570.22. Receipts from the November meeting totaled \$1336.00 bringing a new balance of \$5,906.22. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,189.07 leaving a balance of \$4,717.15 as of December 9. The preservation fund balance was at \$470.00.

### **Membership Report**

One new member attended December's meeting, and another person indicated his desire to join which will bring the current membership to 98.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate reported the following:

The generous Christmas spirit was present in our members at the December Christmas program meeting and, again, through ticket sales and outright donations, we raised another \$100.00 for preservation. That fund now stands at \$570.00.

Our friends at Civil War Preservation Trust keep finding battlefields worthy of protection as it is their job to do. Those threatened fields we have been working to save include the Slaughter Pen at Fredericksburg, Glendale or Frayser's Farm, and other sites around the Richmond area. These are what we should concentrate on until we can definitely include them in our "saved" column. Otherwise, we may scatter our funds helter skelter like Hank Paulson with the bailout money and end up saving very little.

As we all know, 2009 is the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln's birth. Our program people are having several programs next year on Lincoln. To that extent, we are getting some books on Lincoln for the raffles.

A very merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all of you who have supported battlefield preservation so whole-heartedly.

### **January Round Table Topic**

The membership voted in November to choose "Lincoln and his Top Ten Generals" as the topic for January's round table discussion. So bone up on Lincoln and his generals and join in the round table discussion which always proves lively and informative.

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### Ed's Artifacts

Ed brought nothing violent from his collection in keeping with the spirit of Christmas. A miniature sculpture told of Sgt. Kirkland of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Carolina who was known as the Angel of Marye's Heights for bringing water to Yankees who were trapped on the battlefield. CDV's portrayed Civil War soldiers holding hands and kissing, and he explained that this was common behavior at that time. As always, we are grateful to Ed for sharing his vast knowledge and collection of artifacts.

### December's Program, the Ken Purcell Family Singers

Once again, we were put into the Christmas spirit by this family of wonderful musicians. Dressed as Naval musicians, they presented a variety of Civil War era music including Christmas carols. We were reminded that music played a prominent role in a soldier's life. Especially moving was their performance of the Irish version of "When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again" and the theme song from the film *Gods and Generals*.

We also owe thanks to Richard Kennedy for bringing back and setting up his "stage" for the musicians. We realize that it involved considerable time and work, and we are grateful for that.

### January Trivia

Barbara Shafer challenges the membership to be prepared with answers to the following questions in January:

- ❖ How many Union Generals were there during the Civil War?
- ❖ Who were the youngest Union Generals in the US Army during the Civil War?
- ❖ Who were the oldest Union Generals in the US Army during the Civil War?

Study the answers to the above questions and you will be able to participate in the discussion at January's meeting! Thanks, Barbara.

### Quotable

Barbara Shafer offers the following well-known quote:

**With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.**—Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address,

### January's Meeting

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Boneless Pork Loin with Cranberry BBQ, Broiled Haddock in garlic clam sauce, and Baked Ziti with Meatballs.**

**The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservations and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, January 5, 2009. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.**

### 2008-2009 Schedule Update

January 13, 2009:	Round Table Discussion—Lincoln's Generals
February 10:	Dr. Brian Alnutt—Lincoln
March 10:	Tom Tate, "Lincoln and the War Governors"*** Please note that the topic listed in December's newsletter was incorrect.
April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of "Isn't This Glorious!", stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and beyond
May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckenridge

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610-678-1168 or zeibers@comcast.net

# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**February 2009**



## **Round Table Business**

On January 13, 2009, Vice President Ron Rhein called to order the January meeting of the First Defenders Round Table with 50 members and guests in attendance. Dave Fox offered a prayer and then informed members of the latest news of the June 6<sup>th</sup> field trip to Frederick, MD. Please refer to the enclosed attachment for itinerary, costs, meal choices, etc. Dave and Roger would like to remind all members that spouses are most welcome on the trip.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ's report began with a balance from December 9, 2008, of \$4,717.15. Receipts from the December meeting totaled \$1,060.00 bringing a new balance of \$5,777.15. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,566.88 leaving a balance of \$4,210.27 as of January 13, 2009. The preservation fund balance was \$570.00.

### **Membership Report**

Pat Christ had no new membership information, but Ron Rhein introduced Dr. Glenn Elliot who is interested in becoming a round table member.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate informed the membership that Virginia has set aside money for battlefield preservation and will match each dollar given for such purposes. He deems the Cold Harbor/Richmond area to be among the most threatened and would advise the possibility of a donation there. There is no imminent need to send money at this point in time.

Tom also reported the following:

Again, the members in attendance at our January meeting contributed another \$106.00 to our growing Preservation fund. As of January the amount has reached \$676.00. We should be able to make another contribution of \$1,000.00 again this year to battlefield preservation. This is certainly significant as the economy has made us all tighten our belts. Thanks, again, to those who have contributed books for the raffle.

With our celebration of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln's birth, there will be a good selection of Lincoln books on the table to be raffled over the next several months.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing brought two weapons to the January meeting for our inspection. The first was an 1863 naval cutlass with a 32" blade. The cutlass was designed for close quarters fighting. When they were manufactured, they cost \$4.53 per cutlass including a scabbard. Ships were given an allotment of cutlasses—often around 20 per ship. These were in use into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The second weapon was a .36 caliber Savage Navy revolver weighing 3.7 pounds. This is a double action gun for which the Navy paid \$18.00 a piece. These weapons were heavy and unwieldy and, despite the purchase of 1200, they were given to cavalry regiments. Bullets fired from these weapons are rarely found although several have turned up at Stone's River. Thanks, Ed, for once again sharing your artifacts and expertise.



### January's Round Table

Once a year, we experience a true "round table" discussion. The topic this year was 'Lincoln's Top Ten Union Generals'. Many of those in attendance participated in a spirited debate attempting to narrow the choices to 10. There was a wide variety of opinions as to exactly who these ten men are. Some tried to interject Confederate generals while others attempted to bring World War II generals into the mix...for comparison only! I am relatively confident that we all know the difference between the two conflicts.

Barbara Shafer's quiz on generals' trivia and Mike Gabriel's list of ten began our discussion. In no particular order, we found consensus on the following ten:

1. Henry Hunt, 2. George Meade, 3. U.S. Grant, 4. William Sherman,
5. W. S. Hancock, 6. George Thomas, 7. Phil Sheridan, 8. John Logan,
9. John Sedgwick, 10. a tie between Winfield Scott and William Rosecrans.

Everyone can now begin thinking about next January's round table when we will dissect Jefferson Davis's top ten generals.

### February Trivia

1. On February 11, 1861, what did both Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln do?
2. Name another member of the Lincoln family who served as President.
3. Abraham Lincoln was the first President to go online; what type of communication did he use?

**Note\*:** The speakers for the 2009-2010 campaign are being contacted. If you would like to speak at a meeting, please contact Errol Steffy, 610.927.4379, or Barbara Shafer, 484.336.8995, by April 2009.

### Quotable Tributes by and About Abraham Lincoln



From Tom Tate—

"Slavery for Lincoln was any relationship of economic restraint, or any systematic effort to box ambitious and enterprising people like himself into a 'fixed condition of labor, for his whole life.'"—*Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation* by Allen Guelzo

From Mike Straus—

"The troops cheered the Commander-in-Chief as he inspected the Army of the James. Upon seeing him for the first time, Colonel Theodore Lyman of Gen.

George Meade's staff recalled,

'The President is, I think, the ugliest man I ever put my eyes on; there is also an expression of plebeian vulgarity in his face that is offensive. On the other hand, he has the look of sense and wonderful shrewdness, while the heavy eyelids give him a mark of almost genius. He strikes me, too, as a very honest and kindly man; and, with all his vulgarity, I see no trace of low passions in his face. On the whole, he is such a mixture of all sorts, as only America brings forth. He is as much like a highly intellectual and

benevolent Satyr as anything I can think of. I never wish to see him again, but, as humanity runs, I am well content to have him at the head of affairs.”



From Linda Zeiber—

In 1832, at the time of the Black Hawk War, Lincoln was drilling his men, and they were marching with twenty men fronting in line across a field when he wished to pass through a gate into the next field. “I could not for the life of me,” said Lincoln, “remember the proper word of command for getting my company ‘endwise,’ so that it could get through the gate, so, as we came near the gate, I shouted: ‘This company is dismissed for two minutes, when it will fall in again on the other side of the gate.’”

From Barbara Shafer—

“And in the end, it’s not the years in your life that count, it’s the life in your years.”

--Abraham Lincoln

### February’s Meeting

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Ham Steak with grape glaze, Grilled Strawberry Bourbon Salmon, and Stuffed Shells with spinach tomato cream sauce.**

**The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, February 2, 2009. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.**

### 2009 Schedule

February 10:	Dr. Brian Alnutt—Lincoln
March 10:	Tom Tate, “Lincoln and the War Governors”
April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of “Isn’t This Glorious!”, stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and Beyond.
May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckinridge
June 6:	Field trip to Frederick, MD



### Weather Alert

Should weather make travel difficult to Moselem Springs for a meeting, tune to WEEU for cancellation information. Additionally, if you made a dinner reservation, you may receive a call if it is necessary to cancel a meeting.



Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610.678.1168 or [zeibers@comcast.net](mailto:zeibers@comcast.net)

# The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter

March 2009




## Round Table Business

On February 10, 2009, President Mike Gabriel called to order the February meeting of the First Defenders Round Table with 52 members and guests in attendance. Dave Fox was called on to give members a reminder of the latest news of the June 6<sup>th</sup> field trip to Frederick, MD. All members and spouses and/or guests should refer to the attachment for itinerary, costs, meal choices, etc. included in the February newsletter. If anyone has lost that form, contact Dave Fox, Mike Gabriel, or Linda Zeiber for another form. The cost of the trip is \$88 per person, and there are 12+ reservations at this time. Even though it may seem early, it is most helpful to Dave and Roger to complete your reservations as soon as possible.

### Treasurer's Report

Arlan Christ's report began with a balance from January 13, 2009, of \$4,210.27. Receipts from the January meeting totaled \$1,106.00 bringing a new balance of \$5,316.27. Expenses incurred totaled \$974.64 leaving a balance of \$4,341.63 as of February 10, 2009. The preservation fund balance was \$676.00.

On a personal note, Arlan displayed and described a log cabin quilt from his and Pat's extensive quilt collection. He dated the the 1870's and 1880's. He reported because it had been crafted using a  us of the PA quilt exhibit being quilt to 1890 and the fabrics used from that it was particularly unusual treadle sewing machine. He reminded sponsored by the Kutztown Historical Society every Sunday this coming May. Many quilts to be displayed have never been shown in public before and two have direct connections to the Civil War. Anyone wanting more information about this exhibit should speak to Pat or Arlan Christ.

### Vice President's Report

Ron Rhein expressed thanks to Tom Tate for co-hosting the January round table discussion as well as to members who attended and participated in the evening's lively discussion. Ron suggested that Montgomery Meigs should have been included as a top Union general which now brings the top ten generals to twelve, considering that we had a tie for #10 on the list by meeting's end.

Ron also discussed the need for money for land acquisition/preservation for the Cedar Creek Battlefield. The Civil War Preservation Trust has made it known that there are 30 to 1 matching funds since they have access to government funds. Tom Tate suggested sending \$500 to Cedar Creek which was approved by the membership.

### Book Raffle/Preservation

Tom Tate reported the following:

Ron Rhein made the worthwhile pitch (see above) that we consider making a contribution to Cedar Creek Battlefield that is being threatened by an ever-encroaching mining operation. Donations get matching funds of 30-1. To help us in this regard, we

once again raised another \$119.00 for preservation at the February meeting which brings our total to \$794.00.

With the months of March, April, and May remaining, we should easily meet our unofficial goal of \$1,000.00 for preservation. We generally raise that amount each year and make contributions totaling that amount annually. Thanks to the membership for the generous support. Members have been generous in making book donations as well. I've arranged to have more space available for books now and appreciate the members easing off donations until I could get the space at home to store them.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed brought a Spencer cavalry carbine for our inspection last month. Ed reported that Christian Spencer, who introduced the 7-shot rifle, had met Lincoln who fired it. Lincoln liked the weapon but did not care for the cost which was \$40.00 at the time compared to \$17 or \$18.00 for a muzzleloader. The Spencer went into service in October of 1863 and was a 52 caliber repeater capable of firing 21 aimed shots per minute. The Spencer weighed 8.25 pounds and had a 22" barrel. The cavalry loved it. This is described as a very modern weapon known for its accuracy.

### **February's Round Table Presentation**

Dr. Brian Alnutt, history professor at Kutztown, gave a presentation about Lincoln and his evolving ideas of slavery and race. Dr. Alnutt reminded us of the negative epithets and attention given to Lincoln and explored the reasons for these...freeing the slaves?...going to war?...being a racist?

Most founding fathers believed that slavery was not desirable and used euphemisms regarding it. They thought it should just die away. Lincoln's family, primitive Baptists when he was born, were forcefully opposed to slavery. We then were asked to consider how his views evolved during his political career.

Lincoln's views must be put into the context of his time. His views were not static and ranged from colonization of slaves to Liberia to retaining slavery—certainly not allowing expansion—for preserving the Union. And, even though Lincoln eventually wrote the Emancipation Proclamation, he never believed in equality between races. Lincoln moved ahead of his time, however, when he grew to believe that if equality could not be achieved, then there must be acceptance of freed slaves. His ideas certainly changed as he got to know blacks.

### **March Trivia by Barbara Shafer**

1. She served as a Union nurse until she fell ill with typhoid. In 1863, released under her name was a collection of wartime letters published as "Hospital Sketches." Who is she?
2. Who was known as the "Calico Colonel"?
3. What Scottish native raised in Alabama was enlisted in the Confederate Army's medical department as a hospital matron?

### **About Abraham Lincoln**



From Linda Zeiber—

It was a common thing for Lincoln to discourage unnecessary lawsuits; and, consequently, he was continually sacrificing opportunities to make money. One man who asked him to bring suit for two dollars and a half against a debtor, who had not a cent with which to pay, would not be put off

in his passion for revenge. His counsel therefore gravely demanded ten dollars as a retainer. Half of this he gave to the poor defendant, who thereupon confessed judgment and paid the \$2.50. Thus the suit was ended to the entire satisfaction of the angry creditor.

### Quotable

From Barbara Shafer...

"This conflict is one thing I've been waiting for. I'm well and strong and young— young enough to go to the front. If I can't be a soldier, I'll help soldiers...when there is no longer a soldier's arm to raise the Stars and Stripes above our Capitol, may God give strength to mine." ...Clara Barton in 1861

### March 10, 2009 Meeting

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Yankee Pot Roast, Roasted Turkey with gravy, or Baked Ziti with meatballs.** The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, March 2, 2009. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.

### 2009 Program Schedule

March 10:	Tom Tate, "Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief"
April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of "Isn't This Glorious!", stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and Beyond.
May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckinridge
June 6:	Field trip to Frederick, MD



### Weather Alert

Should weather make travel difficult to Moselem Springs for a meeting, tune to WEEU for cancellation information. Additionally, if you made a dinner reservation, you may receive a call if it is necessary to cancel a meeting.



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# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**April 2009**



## **Round Table Business**

On March 10, 2009, President Mike Gabriel called to order the March meeting of the First Defenders Round Table with 51 members and guests in attendance. Mike reminded everyone of the vote to elect officers in May and, that anyone interested in holding office, should let it be known to the nominating committee prior to April's meeting.

Dave Fox was called on to give members a reminder of the latest news of the June 6<sup>th</sup> field trip to Frederick, MD. All members and spouses and/or guests should refer to the attachment for itinerary, costs, meal choices, etc. included in the February newsletter. If anyone has lost that form, contact Dave Fox at 610.582.9245. The evening meal choices are prime rib, chicken, or salmon. The cost of the trip is \$88 per person, and there are 18+ reservations at this time. You are encouraged to invite neighbors and friends.

Vice President Ron Rhein announced a correction to last month's newsletter. Following discussion of a \$500 donation to Cedar Creek, Ed Ewing moved to send this money to the battlefield and not Tom Tate as reported in the March newsletter.

Bruce Englehart gave his impressions of the new visitor center/museum at the Gettysburg Military Park from a recent visit which sparked a lively discussion of other members' impressions of the newly-opened facility. Opinions are as diverse as our membership, but all agree that it should not be missed, especially the newly restored Cyclorama.

## **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ's report began with a balance from February 10, 2009, of \$4,341.63. Receipts from the February meeting, including field trip money, totaled \$2,108.00 bringing a new balance of \$6,449.63. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,758.95 leaving a balance of \$4,690.68 as of March 10, 2009. The preservation fund balance was \$294.00.

Once again, Arlan displayed and described another quilt from his and Pat's extensive quilt collection. He dated this quilt to the late 1880's.

was probably made by Mennonites or is being sponsored by the Kutztown



Many quilts to be displayed have never connections to the Civil War. Anyone wanting more information about this exhibit should speak to Pat or Arlan Christ.

The pattern is known as the Drunkard's Path, and it Amish. Be reminded that a Pennsylvania quilt exhibit Historical Society every Sunday this coming May.

been shown in public before, and two have direct connections to the Civil War. Anyone wanting more information about this exhibit should speak to Pat or Arlan Christ.

## **Membership**

Pat Christ asked Roger Cotterill to introduce his guest for the evening. Keeping with tradition, Roger brought Brent Achtymichuk (pronounced just like it's spelled!) who is from Edmonton, Alberta. Roger has been and continues to be a one-man United Nations ambassador spreading word of the round table throughout the Canadian Provinces.

## **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate reported the following:

Once again the members dug deep and, through their efforts, we added another \$124.00 to our preservation fund. That puts us over \$900.00 and, with the next two remaining months, I am sure that we will raise an amount in excess of \$1,000.00. We voted \$500.00 (\*See the Treasurer's Report above which indicates that the donation to Cedar Creek has been sent.) to protect the Cedar Creek Battlefield

at our February meeting, and there are other Virginia sites worthy of our support, particularly at Cold Harbor. Protecting ground around Cold Harbor also protects battlefields of the 1862 Peninsula Campaign as Cold Harbor in 1864 was fought on much the same ground.

We will have some books to raffle particular to our April speakers as well as an unusual item donated by Russ Angstadt. You will have no trouble identifying it.

### Ed's Artifacts

Ed Ewing brought three Civil War documents for our inspection last month. Ed reported some interest among members in documents and therefore shared with us 3 from his collection. Two of these were commissions--one from Governor Curtin and the other from the governor of Ohio. The third document was from the governor of Connecticut asking for leave for a private who was obviously well-connected. Again, thanks, Ed.

### March's Round Table Presentation

Mike introduced our own Tom Tate who has given several presentations in the past. The topic for the evening was "Lincoln and His Admirals". Tom had recently read a book written by Craig Symons who wrote about the relationship of Lincoln and his naval admirals. Tom found these stories rounded out the history of Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief and shared them with us.

Tom reminded us that we do not think of Lincoln as leading troops in the style of George Washington or Andrew Jackson. Lincoln had to define how he was going to be an effective commander-in-chief. Realizing that he had to attack the South on many fronts, Lincoln knew that the army and navy didn't work together and, in dealing with this, he began to define his leadership role.

The "mortar-fleet" project championed his plan to integrate these two bodies of the military. Thus Lincoln brought David Dixon Porter's plan to life involving the army and the navy, and it seemed rather successful.

In May 1862 Lincoln tried to get McClellan to move on the Peninsula. He took a revenue cutter down the Potomac to Hampton Roads. He ordered much armament into Fortress Monroe to keep it in Union hands unlike what had happened at Fort Sumter. On board Admiral Goldsboro's flagship, Lincoln spotted Confederate guns that he could see from the ship's deck and *strongly encouraged* their removal. Trying to get something moving on a tactical level, he encouraged Wool to take Norfolk.

It seems safe to assume that nothing would have happened had Lincoln not gotten personally involved with the navy. The mortar boat project and movement on taking Norfolk back this up. That Grant took advantage of the inland navy also affirms this. Grant, Porter, and Sheridan worked together in the war effort, particularly in the area of troop transport.

Thank you, Tom, for sharing with us still a new angle and view on Lincoln, his Admirals, and the Civil War navy.

### April Trivia by Barbara Shafer

1. In 1862, why was Abraham Lincoln's October salary less than it was in September?
2. What was the 20<sup>th</sup> Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry known as?
3. Who was the biggest fool on April Fool's Day of 1865?

### About Abraham Lincoln



From Linda Zeiber—

On the night of the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, Mr. Lincoln was serenaded by many friends and enthusiastic Northerners. He made the usual kindly conciliatory speech and cordially invited the erring States to come back into the family.

The band played all sorts of patriotic airs—"Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean," "Star-spangled Banner," and others. Mr.

Lincoln, looking toward the band-master, suggested: "Play 'Dixie' now. It's ours."  
So throughout his whole career, his attitude was generous toward the South.

### Quotable

From Barbara Shafer—

"Follow the colors of the Nineteenth." General Alexander Webb

### April 14, 2009 Meeting

This month we welcome Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, two gifted Civil War historians, with a gripping story about Pickett's Charge. On July 3, 1863 Robert E. Lee launched almost 13,000 of his soldiers in a final effort to win a victory at the Battle of Gettysburg. Known to everyone as Pickett's Charge, this attack was turned away by Union soldiers from George Meade's Army of the Potomac. The attack's focal point was a small copse of trees around a stone wall. Three Massachusetts infantry regiments helped to defend this area and played a crucial role in defeating the rebel troops.

Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker are the authors of *Isn't This Glorious!: The 15th, 19th, and 20th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiments at Gettysburg's Copse of Trees*, a recounting of actions of soldiers from these three regiments. Ed and Jeff spent years doing research in Massachusetts records and the veterans' pension records in the National Archives. From their work they have produced a book that tells the individual stories of the men who fought there. In the words of Robert E. L. Krick, a well known Civil War historian and author, Root and Stocker's book contains "page after page of outstanding research ...lots of detail made interesting by the personal approach."

**"Isn't This Glorious!"**--For those of you who love a great bargain, you can buy a copy of the book, which lists for \$34.95 at the meeting at a discount.

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Boneless Pork Loin with Cranberry Barbeque, Pineapple Chicken, and Broiled Haddock** in garlic clam stock. The price is now \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, April 6, 2009. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.

### 2009 Program Schedule

April 14:	Edwin Root and Jeffrey Stocker, authors of "Isn't This Glorious!", stories of the 15 <sup>th</sup> , 19 <sup>th</sup> , and 20 <sup>th</sup> Massachusetts at Gettysburg and Beyond.
May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckinridge
June 6:	Field trip to Frederick, MD

Newsletter contact: Linda Zeiber, 610.678.1168 or zeibers@comcast.net



# **The First Defenders Civil War Round Table Newsletter**

**May 2009**



## **Round Table Business**

On April 14, 2009, President Mike Gabriel called to order the April meeting of the First Defenders Round Table with 71 members and guests in attendance. Vice President Ron Rhein led the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a prayer.

Dave Fox was called on to give members a reminder of the latest news of the June 6<sup>th</sup> field trip to Frederick, MD. There are still seats on the bus available that must be sold in order to break even financially. The bus will depart at 7:00 a.m. from Kutztown University (see enclosed map). The trip will begin with a tour of the Museum of Medicine and then a tour of the Monocacy Battlefield. Dinner will be held at the Carriage House in Emmitsburg, MD. The keynote speaker has recently written a book on Gen. Lew Wallace and will speak on that topic. Contact Dave Fox at 610.582.9245 as soon as possible to be included if you have not already done so. The cost of the trip is \$88 per person. You are encouraged to invite neighbors and friends. Dave and Roger are checking into wheelchair accessibility. The Monocacy tour will involve little walking. More information on this matter will be given at the May meeting.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Arlan Christ's report began with a balance from March 10, 2009, of \$4,690.68. Receipts from the March meeting, including field trip money, totaled \$1,720.00 bringing a new balance of \$6,410.68. Expenses incurred totaled \$1,116.15 leaving a balance of \$5,294.53 as of April 14, 2009. The preservation fund balance was \$418.00.

Once again, Arlan displayed and described another quilt that will be featured at the Kutztown Historical Society in May. This quilt will be donated and then raffled! Be reminded that an exhibit of 32 Pennsylvania quilts is being sponsored by the Kutztown Historical Society every Sunday this coming May. Many quilts to be displayed have never been shown in public before, and two have direct connections to the Civil War. Anyone wanting more information about this exhibit should speak to Pat or Arlan Christ.



### **Membership**

Pat Christ had no new information regarding membership. But Member Jeff Elliot brought two guests from the Army War College, his father Col. Elliot and Col. Dunn, and introduced them to the round table members.

### **Programs**

Errol Steffy asked that any members interested in doing a program or who know someone who might give one to contact him as soon as possible for inclusion in next season's campaign.

### **Book Raffle/Preservation**

Tom Tate reported the following:

Once again the members out-did themselves at our April meeting. With ticket sales amounting to \$154.00 and a generous \$5.00 donation, we added another \$159.00 to our preservation fund. That brings the total that we have raised this season to \$1,072.00. We have already donated \$500.00 to Cedar Creek in February so the account



currently has \$572.00. We will select a site or sites at the May meeting to receive our money so members might consider some worthy candidates.

Two that I happen to think are worthy are Richmond Battlefields Association which is trying to save ten acres at Cold Harbor. The other is the Slaughter Pen at Fredericksburg, VA, which is being protected by both CWPT and the Central Virginia Battlefields Association. On both these fields, the Army of the Potomac fought and bled.

Not only were our members generous with their dollars, but they donated a large number of books. It is a good thing that I have a LARGE canvas bag to carry them all in. Thanks to all who made a contribution one way or another for battlefield preservation.

### **Ed's Artifacts**

Ed Ewing brought a large assortment of artifacts from Gettysburg from the 1870's and 1880's. Included were bullets, badges, a canteen, and hat insignia and many others for our inspection last month. Ed invited members to inspect these things for themselves. Thanks, Ed. Where do you keep all of this?!

### **Barbara's Trivia for May**

1. To date, I am the youngest Vice President in U.S. history, inaugurated at age 36. Who am I?
2. Originally known as Decoration Day, what is the holiday celebrated as today?
3. What are some ways to observe Memorial Day?

### **April's Round Table Presentation**

Barbara Shafer introduced the speakers for the evening. They were Edwin R. Root, Jeffrey D. Stocker, and Dick Jacoby who published a book entitled, "Isn't This Glorious!" which discusses the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, and 20<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiments at Gettysburg's copse of trees.

Jeff Stocker began the program by talking about the men of these regiments and their personal stories which were uncovered by spending hundreds of hours pouring through pension records in the National Archives in Washington as well as letters and diaries. Their intent was to put a human face on the 'dots' on the map. Jeff analyzed the roll played by these men in repulsing Pickett's Charge.

Ed Root spent the second part of the presentation discussing the memorials to these soldiers in order that their service would always be remembered. We learned of the Massachusetts veterans' struggle to have their roll acknowledged and the details of the often-overlooked process of battlefield monumentation.

Dick Jacoby drew the detailed maps included in the book showing the positions of the three regiments throughout July 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1863.

These men gave a terrific program which presented new material for most in attendance. With the thousands of books that have been written about Gettysburg, they found a fresh angle on a well-covered topic.

### **By Abraham Lincoln**



From Linda Zeiber—

It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not, that we be not judged. —1865 inaugural address



## Quotable

From Barbara Shafer—

"My poor Orphans! My poor Orphans!"—John C. Breckinridge after the Battle of Stones River as he rode among survivors of the Orphan Brigade

"...gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime...let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude,—the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan."—General John Logan, General Order No. 11, 5 May 1868 How to Observe Memorial Day

From Mike Straus—

On July 3, 1863, Confederate Major General Isaac Ridgeway Trimble was wounded in the left leg while leading his men forward during the third day's fighting at Gettysburg. Fate eventually would bring the 61-year-old Trimble and his eccentric personality to the hospital on Seminary Ridge where he would cross paths with Martha Ehler and the patriotic daughters of Lancaster. Martha singled out the "very fierce-looking" Trimble for censure...

"For men like Gen. Trimble, I have no sympathy. Theirs was the infamy of inaugurating this wicked rebellion, and they should be the sufferers. Had any of our poor officers, in their Southern dungeons, dared to show half the audacity of this man, he would have been immediately shot; while Gen. Trimble would order the best of everything cooked, and if it did not please him, send it back to the kitchen. I was there one day when his dinner was returned; it consisted of nice fried ham and eggs, with mashed potatoes and onions, but it did not please him. Norris, who was the cook, asked me what he should do. I suggested letting him wait until his appetite improved, which was done; no other dinner was supplied."

## May 12, 2009 Meeting

Dinner selections for the meeting are **Grilled Marinated Chicken Romano, Grilled Strawberry Bourbon Salmon, Stuffed Shells with Spinach Tomato Cream Sauce.** The price is \$20.00 for meals. Please call in your reservation and menu selection at 610.683.4384 no later than Monday, May 4, 2009. Please call after 5:00 p.m. and speak clearly.

## 2009 Program Schedule

May 12:	Rob Marks—Biography of Major General John Breckinridge
June 6:	Field trip to Frederick, MD

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\*I will be on vacation from May 1 through May 25, 2009, and will therefore miss the final meeting of the round table this season. If you have material for the September 2009 newsletter, please be sure that I have it no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>. Have a great summer. See you in September. Linda

## Election of Officers

A slate of candidates of the round table officers will be announced at the May meeting, with the election to follow. If anyone is interested in running, please contact a board member.