

The utpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable
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424th Regular Meeting

DATE: 2nd October 2009
PLACE: Fairview Village, Downers Grove, IL.
TIME: 8:00 p.m.
SPEAKER: Rick Benson
TOPIC: "Andersonville Commandant, Capt. Henry Wirz"

This month the topic of discussion is "Andersonville Commandant, Capt. Henry Wirz". The presentation will be given by Rick Benson.

Rick will give a brief background on Captain Wirz, from his upbringing to his arrival in North America. The discussion will continue with Captain Wirz work background here in North America. With the start of the Civil War, Rick will deal with both the "how" and "why" Wirz got involved in becoming a Prison Camp Commandant. Lastly, Rick will address the trial Henry Wirz received from the military tribunal in Washington, DC at the conclusion of the war.

Rick Benson is a Sales and Marketing Manager. He has had the opportunity to travel extensively across North America.

Rick thought about getting into Reenacting and Presenting a couple of years ago while working as a volunteer at Naperville Civil War Days. Rick originally wanted to do PTG Beaugard. A reenactor told Rick that "He needed to join his unit and be nominated by the members to portray Beaugard. That did not seem to be a good plan. He then looked at doing a civilian "Confederate VP Alexander Stephens. The presentation would have been short. Rick's High School Advisor suggested Henry Wirz. Rick had been to Andersonville, hence his feelings were "why not", and here I am.

SEPTEMBER MEETING BY RICK BENSON

On September 4 2009, Art Foley presented, "The Five Civilized Tribes and The Civil War." Art Foley is a member of the SCCWRT. Art Foley began his presentation by identifying the assorted reference books he had used in his research for the presentation. Art then showed a map of what is now part of the states of Kansas and Oklahoma. In 1861, Oklahoma was identified as "The Indian Territories" on official maps. The Five Civilized Tribes were the Cherokees, Creeks, Chickasaws, Choctaws, and Seminoles. These tribes had been driven by the white man from primarily the Southeast and East. The route they marched to get to the Indian Territories became known as the "Trail of Tears."

The Cherokees appeared to be the most socially advanced of the five tribes. They in fact created the first free school system. Geographically, the Cherokees occupied essentially the Eastern portion of the Indian Territory (what is now the State of Oklahoma), up to the State of Arkansas border. The population of men, women, and children in these various tribes were approximately as follows Cherokee 21,000; Creek 13,000; Chickasaw 5,000; Seminole 2,200; and Choctaw 2,000. What many people do not know was that Indians too owned slaves.

The South was desirous of establishing an official governmental relationship with the Five Civilized Tribes. As such, the Confederates sent Albert Pike to the Indian Territories to develop a relationship. The Confederacy offered the same inducements as the Union. In addition to these inducements, the Confederacy offered to acknowledge the Sovereignty of the Indian Nations. Plus they would allow the Indians to be

represented in the Confederate Congress. The Confederate Government placed Albert Pike militarily in charge of the Indian Territories for 1861 and 1862. He was succeeded by General William Steel for a portion of 1863. Major General Samuel Bell Maxey was next, completing 1863 to 1865. Finally, Brigadier General Douglas Cooper took over until the war was over.

Many of the Indians had no desire to align themselves with either the North or the South, as both governments were run by white men, and for some reason they did not have a good feeling about the intentions of the white man in general. Unfortunately for them, both the Union and Confederate governments would not allow them to stay neutral. This caused friction with the tribes, and old grievances, etc., came out within the tribes, and literally caused a split within a tribe. This can be exemplified by the Cherokees. John Ross was the head of the Unionist leaning portion of the Cherokees. His opposite on the Confederate side was Stand Waite, who became a Confederate General. John Ross was captured in battle by the Confederate Cherokees. He escaped, and made his way to Philadelphia, along with the Unionist Cherokee Treasury, for the balance of the war. He lived well in Philadelphia.

From 1863 to 1865 action taken by Confederate General Stand Waite and General Gano amounted to guerilla hit and run raids. In 1863 Gen. Stand Waite ambushed a wagon train in the Battle of Cabin Creek. He captured roughly \$1.5 million 1863 dollars worth of supplies and equipment from the Union Army. He was publicly commended for his efforts by Confederate President Jefferson Davis on the floor of the Confederate Congress. With the coming of 1865, hostilities

between both the split Indian tribes essentially ceased. General Stand Waite was the last Confederate General to officially surrender in June 1865. The Treaty of 1866 from the Federal government relieved the tribes of their "Sovereign Status". Much of the territory had to be rebuilt, and old feuds had to be buried.

INFORMATION FROM THE BOARD BY RICK ZARR

The Board meeting was held on September 1, 2009. The board is looking for ideas for speakers 2010 Banquet. Rick mentioned there were 76 participants for the Lincoln Symposium. The group has ended as the Lincoln Bicentennial Coalition but we have planned a meeting on September 14 at 7:00pm to see if there is an interest to keep this going. There were letters sent out to Libraries, Museums, History Societies and Park Districts to see if they would be interested in keeping this group going only we would like to see more involvement County wide.

PRESERVATION REPORT BY LEN OVERCASH, SR.

07/15/09 - Virginia Governor Tim Kaine (D) and House of Delegates Speaker William Howell (R) urge the county to reconsider plans to locate a Wal-Mart supercenter on the Wilderness Battlefield and offer the services of the state to forge a compromise solution.

Follow-up 8/25/09 (Orange, Va.) - The Orange County Board of Supervisors today approved a proposal to build 240,000-square feet of big box retail on the Wilderness Battlefield. James Lighthizer, president of the Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), issued the following statement in the wake of the vote:

"I am deeply disappointed by today's vote. The Orange County Board of Supervisors had an opportunity to protect the battlefield by embracing a reasonable compromise approach to the Wal-Mart superstore proposal. Instead, they ignored rational voices on the national, state and local level encouraging them to work with the preservation community and local landowners to find a more suitable alternative location."

"Today's vote is not just a setback for preservationists. Orange County residents are losers as well. If the county had embraced the preservation planning process first proposed by the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition in January, there would have been an opportunity to mitigate the transportation and development impacts of the proposal. Instead, the board voted to repeat the mistakes made by other localities, who are now struggling to address the problems created by similar piecemeal development and rampant sprawl."

(Pocahontas, Tenn.) – The Civil War Preservation Trust (CWPT), the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the historic landscapes at Civil War battlefields, and the State of Tennessee are pleased to announce the purchase and protection of nearly 650 acres of pristine battlefield land at Davis Bridge, Tenn. The fierce battle on October 5, 1862, was the final significant combat around Corinth, Miss., a critical railroad junction, and produced nearly 1,000 casualties. CWPT acquired the property on July 31, and ceremonially donated the property to the State of Tennessee, transferring management to the Tennessee Wars Commission.

UPCOMING CIVIL WAR EVENTS

12th Civil War Symposium & Reenactment
Cantigny Park, Wheaton Illinois
Saturday, October 3, 2009; 9:00-5:00 p.m.
Admission: \$40.00
For more information contact (773) 948-9001 or Chicago.archives@nara.gov
www.firstdivisionmuseum.org

Chicago Civil War Roundtable
Holiday Inn Mart Plaza Chicago, IL
Friday, October 9, 2009
5:30 p.m. Dinner
7:30 p.m. Speaker Presentation
\$40.00 Dinner; \$5.00 for presentation only
1-630-460-1865 to make reservation
www.thecwrt.org

Civil War Ghost Stories
Helen Plum Memorial Library
Sunday, October 18, 2009; 2:00 p.m.
The presenter, Diane Ladley, is an award winning storyteller. This program is geared towards adults. This program will feature ghost stories of the Civil War period. To register or ask questions please call the Helen Plum Memorial Library at (630) 627-0316

ALL FOR THE UNION

Welcome to new members Bruce and Leslie Allardice and Dr. Stefani.

The Civil War Collector's Show was a success. SCCWRT would like to extend theirs thanks to Rick Zarr, Rob Girardi, Rick Benson, Dan McCarthy, Cindy Hecker, Janie Munsie, Paula Walker, Barney Bucholz, Jean Cairns, and Jan Rasmussen for their efforts in helping staff the table and promote the civil war round table movement.

Rick Zarr, Cindy Intravarolo and Jan Rasmussen staffed a table at Pioneer

Days in Elk Grove on September 13th. Rick Benson participated as Henry Wirz. The Annual Battlefield Auction will be held on November 6th at the Glen Ellyn History Center. Donations of books, collectables, prints etc will be gladly accepted and appreciated.

Memorabilia/Show and Tell will be December 4th at Fairview. Volunteers are needed for 10 minute or less presentations. See Jan if you have something to share.

EDITOR'S NOTES

The next board meeting will be at the Fairview Village private dining room on 11/03/09 at 7:30 PM. Call Jan at 630-830-7614 with any questions.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Nov 6- Annual Battlefield Auction at the Glen Ellyn History Center
Dec 4 - Memorabilia/Show and Tell
2010 (3rd Friday of the month)
Jan- Rob Girardi/TBA
Feb- Jim Cunningham/TBA

THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

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Treasurer: Paula Walker
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