

The Outpost

The Newsletter of the Salt Creek Civil War Roundtable
Vol. XLVI No. 3 November 2008



415th Regular Meeting

DATE: 7th November 2008

PLACE: Glen Ellyn Historical Center, 800 N. Main St., Glen Ellyn, IL

TIME: Viewing 7:30 PM Auction begins 8:00 PM

SPEAKER: Dan McCarthy and Jerry Feinstein

TOPIC: Annual Auction for Battlefield Preservation

It seems this year that we in the battlefield preservation movement face a period of economic challenge that is almost unprecedented. The loss of several long-time icons of American banking and finance, the federal government stepping into the economy to an extent not seen since the Great Depression, the bankruptcy of long-trusted names in the retail services area, foreclosure of homes on a massive scale, and the degradation of the life savings and investments of Americans from almost every walk of life. No wonder I read this morning of the crisis in consumer confidence! In the face of all this it would seem at least a little incongruous that we are asking for donations to Civil War battlefield preservation, after all, isn't this something that falls under the rubric of "discretionary spending"? And yet... the need does not slacken because the economy does. I think the importance may lie in the fact that we are being asked to invest in something sacred, everlasting, and affirmative, as opposed to the secular, transitory, and negative. The benefits will lie, a little, in material gain but more in the spiritual benefit to be gained from realizing that your contribution will be looked upon with gratitude by those who come after. As the now-late Louis Terkel once said, "Without the past, there is no present and will not be a future."



OCTOBER MEETING

BY

RICK BENSON

On October 3rd, 2008, Tony Cichantk, Past President of the Salt Creek CWRT, made a presentation on the subject of, "Civilians of Gettysburg". According to the census of 1860, the population of Gettysburg was 2,390. It contained approximately 450 buildings, of which 300 were residences. The primary industry was carriage making. The town also contained 4 tanneries, and 30 shoemakers. Despite this prevalence of footgear, the primary reason for the Confederate interest in Gettysburg was **not** obtaining shoes. It was the 8 access roads which met in an area known as "The Diamond" in the center of town. In addition, Gettysburg was also a center of learning with a college and Lutheran Seminary. In addition, there were 3 newspapers-1 Democratic and 2 Republican. This small locale was to be inundated with approximately:

- 165,000 soldiers
- 90,000 horses
- 6,500 supply wagons
- 1,800 ambulances
- 1,900 caissons!

Starting on June 26, 1863, a number of Gettysburg civilians began having some very interesting

experiences. We will attempt to summarize the harrowing adventures of some of them.

On June 26th, Gen. Jubal Early CSA, and his forces, came to the Gettysburg area. As a result, five members of the Bailey family skedaddled taking their horses with them to Harrisburg. They expressed their gratitude to the Harrisburg farmers who took them in by harvesting their wheat crop. When they returned home, they found that a refugee family from Maryland had stayed at their house and harvested *their* wheat crop for them!

Dr. Samuel Smucker fled Gettysburg because of his public abolitionist speeches. Many fled for fear of being arrested by Confederates. Their fears were justified as Confederate spies and "copperheads" had infiltrated the town some days previously and had been gathering information on the locals.

Mr. Wills owned a tavern downtown. He had just received a shipment of high-quality liquor. He buried it in the back yard under new cabbage plants and left lower-quality liquor to be found, correctly assuming rebels would not believe

that he had none. As expected, it was consumed. However, he lost the good stuff too as rainwater and dirt seeped into the barrels!

When Gen. Early arrived, he demanded a ransom of 7,000 lbs. of bacon, 60 lbs. of coffee, 40 bushels of onions, 1,000 lbs. of salt, 1,000 pairs of shoes, 1,200 lbs. of sugar, 60 barrels of flour, 500 hats, along with \$10,000. Mayor Kendlehart said the town could not meet the demands. He told the Confederates to see what the merchants had and gave them \$5,000. Fortunately, this proved satisfactory and the southerners left on the 27th after burning 17 railroad cars, tearing up the track, and cutting the telegraph. Generally, they got a decent review from the citizens for avoiding pillaging.

The actual battle began north of the town. A 12 year-old boy named David Skelly viewed the battle from Seminary Ridge, along with other townspeople. He departed when Confederate shell came too close to the tree he was observing from.

The alleged "Hero of Gettysburg" was John Burns aged 69 years. He was a veteran of the War of 1812. He fought in McPherson's Woods, first with a Pennsylvania unit, and then with the 7th Wisconsin. He said he was wounded 3 times. Later, it was changed to 7 times. Lincoln wanted to meet him. Burns was not the most respected man in town. He was considered "peculiar" and "eccentric".

The *real* hero of Gettysburg was Elizabeth Horn. On July 1, she baked all day for the soldiers and wounded. On July 2nd, she

personally led union officers through town to show them where their cannons had been shelling and killing their own troops. After the battle, she dug graves for the Union dead at the cemetery. Two men were assigned to help her, but they left after a short while due to the smell. She was paid \$13 a month for her work. She dug 105 graves. What added a certain specialness was that she did all this while 6 months pregnant!

In addition to the famous Jennie Wade, there were 8 other civilians killed as a result of the battle. One man died of an apparent heart attack when a shell exploded close by. Two other civilians, Emmanuel Fossil and George Cavaree were taken prisoner and held for 22 months and 2 years respectively

The SCCWRT gives deep thanks to Tony Cichantk for illuminating this little-known aspect of the titanic struggle at Gettysburg.



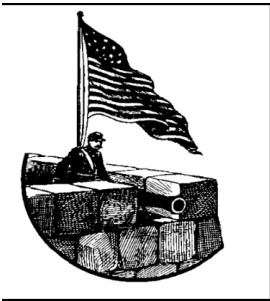
PRESERVATION REPORT

BY

LEN OVERCASH, SR.

The Alliance of Bikers Aimed Toward Education raised approximately \$11,500 for Pennsylvania monuments at Gettysburg and the historic Daniel Lady farm during its annual ride this year. ABATE of Pennsylvania held its ride Sept.27. More than 100 motorcycles and 157 participants from around the state braved the wet weather to ride from Harrisburg to

Battlefield Harley-Davidson in Gettysburg. The money raised included a \$1,500 contribution from Jennifer and Dave LeVan of Battlefield Harley-Davidson. To date, the annual Ride to Gettysburg has raised more than \$75,000. Source: Civil War Interactive (CWI)



ALL FOR THE UNION

Our trip to the Kenosha Civil War museum on October 11 was a great success! A dozen SCCWRT members made it and gave a glowing report. Many thanks to Lance Herdegen and the museum staff for all their efforts.

The 36th Illinois Flag is officially on display at Cantigny! Go by and take a look and reflect with pride on the role you played in bringing about this most desirable consummation.

The SCCWRT is sponsoring a Veteran's Day Memorial Service in the May Chapel at Rosehill Cemetery, 5800 N. Ravenswood Avenue in Chicago. Re-enactors from all of America's wars will be present. Nov. 9 at 11AM. Contact Jerry Feinstein 847-674-0120 with?'s.



EDITOR'S NOTES

The next board meeting will be at the Fairview Village private dining room on 12/2/08 at 7:30 PM.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 5- Show and Tell/
Memorabilia Night. Bring in your precious treasures and let us all see!
January 2, 2009-Rick Benson-Henry Wirz.

February 6- Brian Seiter-Canby vs. Sibley

March 6-Ron Carlson- The Significance of the Civil War Trans-Mississippi in American History

April 3- Charley Banks-Lincoln Funeral Train

May 1-Len Overcash-45th Mississippi/ 3rd Battalion

THE SALT CREEK CIVIL WAR ROUNDTABLE

www.saltcreekcwrt.org

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