



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Tuesday April 9th, 2013 Meeting # 133

Dino's Restaurant at I90 & State Rt. 306 Willoughby, Ohio

Canteen at 6:00 Dinner at 6:50 Guests are Welcome

Speaker: Mel Maurer

Topic: *The Escape and Capture of John Wilkes Booth*

Reservations required Guests are Welcome Please call Mike Sears

Phone: 440-257-3956 e Mail: mikeanddonnas@roadrunner.com



Mr. Mel Maurer - Mel Maurer is a retired Manager of Administrative Quality and Distribution for the Boston Weatherhead Division of Dana Corporation. During his 43 years with Dana, he held management positions in Accounting, Information Technology and Administrative Quality and Distribution.

Mr. Maurer's civic duties when working included being a member of the Williamson County Chamber of Commerce serving as Chairman of the Government Relations Division and serving as host of the Chamber's Public Affairs Roundtable. He was also member of the Brentwood Chamber of Commerce – Government Affairs Committee and a member of the U.S. Chamber's Public Affairs Committee. He also served as a member of the Williamson County Economic Development Showcase Committee, a member of the Tennessee Association of Business Public Affairs Committee; a member of the Policy Board of Directors for "INROADS/NASHVILLE INC."

and a member of the Board of Directors of the Williamson County Heart Association. He wrote columns on government affairs for the Chamber Newsletter and the Nashville Multiple Sclerosis Association. He chaired the Williamson County Toys for Tots (T4T) Campaign and chaired the Government Relations Committee of the Middle Tennessee Multiple Sclerosis Society.

In his retirement, he is a member of the Government Relations committee of the Buckeye Chapter of the MS Society and a 2007 inductee into the National MS Society's Volunteer Hall Of Fame and was selected as one of the "Faces of Westlake" in 2007. He is past president of the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable, now its Historian, and past president of the Philosophical Club of Cleveland and a member of the Titanic Historical Society. He is the 2009 Chairman of Westlake's Charter Review Committee. Mr. Maurer also writes articles for various organizations and speaks on a variety of topics. He has more than 600 "Letters to Editors" printed in a number of newspapers and magazines including: Time, Readers Digest, USA Today, The Plain Dealer, The Sun Press, The Nashville Tennessean, The New Republic and others. He is also a published poet. Mr. Maurer has hosted over 50 hours of TV shows broadcast on cable in Cleveland and other cities in Northeast Ohio and has appeared in two plays presented by the Cleveland Civil War Roundtable and one at the Huntington Playhouse.

Mel Maurer received a Bachelor of Science degree from John Carroll University in Cleveland, Ohio. He and his wife Elaine live in Westlake, Ohio. They have four children, eight grandchildren and one great granddaughter. His interests include writing and speaking on community affairs, charitable causes, history, political issues and personal experiences.

Our thanks to Norty London for Mr. Maurer's Bio

The NEOCWRT is proud to present "The Escape and Capture of John Wilkes Booth" by Mr. Mel Maurer

CIVIL WAR JOURNAL of Franco M. Sperrazzo, Events Coordinator, 4-09-2013

March 12 Meeting, Co-founder Bob Baucher: One must wonder about having a program on the "The Boys of Summer '48". It has been 65 years since our beloved Tribe has gone the distance. Bob mixed highlights of the glorious season with stories of the personalities that created the chemistry for the winning combination which lead to the Indians second world championship. With the assistance of Norty London, Bob included visuals and authentic photos for his presentation. We learned about player-manager Lou Boudreau, Dale Mitchell, Hall of Fame players Bob Feller, Bob Lemon, Larry Doby and others. One year phenom Gene Bearden, Satchel Paige and many unsung heroes. Bob a member of Cleveland Sandlot Baseball and Society for American Baseball Research had his information in order as he entertained 34 fans in attendance with antidotes and special moments of a magic era in Cleveland Indians history.

James A. Garfield@ Mentor Library April 10th, 12:00 – 1:15pm "Major Battles of the Civil War"

The April topic will be the military drafts that were enacted in the North and South to conscript soldiers. Learn why the draft was controversial throughout the Union and Confederacy. Many men went through harsh measures to avoid the draft to such extent, that New York City experienced the famous 1863 draft riots. The program is free and held in the lower level of the Mentor Library, Garfield room. Confirm by calling (440) 255-8811. You can make a last minute decision to attend and bring your lunch if you wish.

Summer Spring Tour, Sat. May 18th Lakeview Cemetery & Western Reserve Historical Society:

Members and guests to arrive by 9:45 to explore much of the 285 acres that hold a treasured chest of notable persons who are buried there. The landscapes, landmarks and legacies make LVC in the upper echelon of cemeteries in America. Our tour guide will be capable Cleveland and Civil War historian Marjorie R. Wilson. Marge gave a customized tour to our members of LVC about ten years ago and was a keynote speaker to our club on Oct 9, 2007. Her topic was Union Brevetted Major General Mortimer Dormer Leggett.

The tour will be both a walking and chartered Learning Link bus rented from University Circle Inc. Lunch will be at famous Cleveland Restaurant and Pizzeria Mama Santas. Free passes for Western Reserve Historical Society will be granted to those who confirm plans to attend. WRHS has on exhibit "Setting the World in Motion" and a new expansion wing that houses Cleveland's old Euclid Beach famous carousel ride. A detailed itinerary with times, meeting locations and costs per person will be provided at our April 9th meeting. RSVP to Franco and Cyndy ASAP so that we may secure our 34 passenger air conditioned bus as our mode of transportation. Francomichael2414@yahoo.com or phone us at (440) 442-4824.

Annual Civil War Military & Collector Show, May 4-5, Mansfield Ohio: Experience the annual encampment, firearms, collector exhibits, historic artifacts, learning programs and suttlers shops in the vast Richland County Fairgrounds. Many of our members attend this annual Civil War event. Surely Ted Karle, Norton London, Rich Hudak, Pat Norris, Dick Muny, John Sandy and yours truly will be glad to share information from our past visits.

Summer Speaker Symposium, July 19, Mentor, Ohio: Our second annual collaboration with the James A. Garfield National Park Service will be held at historic Lawnfield on Friday, July 19th at 7:00pm. This special night will dovetail into their 3rd Civil War encampment at the historic Garfield home and beautiful grounds. Theodore J. Karle and Richard P. Muny will be our honored members who will present their programs. Todd Arrington, NPS Ranger, will MC this event. Topics will be elaborated in the May Courier.

Both events are free courtesy of the National Park Service and NEOCWRT.

Great to see signs of spring as the new 2013 Tribe is back on the warpath. See everyone Tuesday.

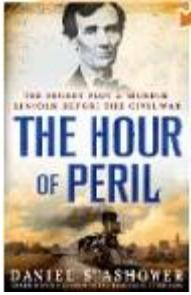
Franco M. Sperrazzo Program E C

Book and 50/50 Raffles: Bernie Taub is selling 50/50 raffle tickets at this month's meeting. And speaking of the book raffle, the raffle will be held at the May meeting and if you have any books you would like to contribute, just bring them to this month's meeting and we will use them as part of the raffle to raise money for the NEOCWRT. Thanks for your support of the NEOCWRT.

North East Ohio Civil War Roundtable – Executive Committee 2013

President – Tom Horvath Vice President – Carl Dodaro Secretary – Steve Abbey Treasurer – Bill Meissner and Terry Reynolds, Norty London, Bob Baucher, Mike Sears, Franco Sperrazzo, Joe Tirpak, John Sandy and Arlan Byrne. If you would like to help with the NEOCWRT discussions, planning, or suggestions and would like to attend the executive committee meetings, please give your name to Tom Horvath, Carl Dodaro or Steve Abbey, so you can be notified of the time and place for the next meeting. Any time you can donate will be appreciated. To send an article to the NEOCWRT Courier, please e-mail it to neocwrtcourier@yahoo.com by the last weekend of each month or mail it to NEOCWRT c/o Carl Dodaro, 6666 Vrooman Rd., Leroy, OH 44077. Any contributions are very appreciated.

The Hour of Peril by Daniel Stashower— a book review by Tom Horvath



The major contention of this narrative is that there was a very real plot to keep Lincoln from being inaugurated by assassinating him before he reached Washington -- as he travelled between train stations in Baltimore -- and that the plan was foiled by Allen Pinkerton. Despite the many words spent on uncovering and circumventing the plot to kill Lincoln, the thread that runs through this volume is the life of Allen Pinkerton.

The author traces Pinkerton's roots in Scotland, his early life, and his departure for America as a wanted man. He began his new life in Illinois, where he became a successful cooper. His movement into police and detective work was both accidental and pushed upon him. His early attempts at apprehending criminals were not always successful, but he was persistent.

The investigation into the assassination plot began when Pinkerton was called to the Philadelphia area by Samuel Morse Felton to protect his railroad, the Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore. Felton received word that, because the railroad was a major link between the north and Washington, D.C., southern radicals were planning on breaking that link. Pinkerton's agency, by this time, was well known for protecting railroad shipments and for his work in tracking down train robbers. He set to work with a number of operatives and in their efforts to uncover plots against the railroad, discovered the plot against Lincoln. By the time Pinkerton was convinced of the seriousness of the plot and discovered the details, Lincoln was already on his way from Springfield. Pinkerton contacted Norman Judd, Lincoln's close friend, who was travelling with him. In Philadelphia, Pinkerton met with Judd and Lincoln to discuss the details of the plot and to propose a change in travel plans that had Lincoln leaving for Washington that day, getting him through Baltimore undetected and earlier than expected.

Lincoln, however, would not be deterred from his final commitments in Philadelphia and Harrisburg the following day, but promised to put himself in Pinkerton's hands once those commitments were fulfilled. Despite that promise, Lincoln entertained second thoughts once in Harrisburg. Then he heard from William Seward, who warned of the same or a similar plot. Still, Lincoln was not convinced until he was satisfied that the two reports were based on separate sources and not one man's story reported through different channels.

Pinkerton, who had been very busy planning while waiting to see Lincoln in Philadelphia, had to change everything. Instead of leaving on a two leg trip from Philadelphia that night, Lincoln would be leaving from Harrisburg on a three leg trip the next day. Pinkerton used his railroad connections to arrange special trains and hold regularly scheduled trains in place until Lincoln arrived. Thus, Lincoln sneaked through Baltimore and arrived early and safely in Washington.

Overall, the book is interesting and well written. In many instances, the author raises questions about the truthfulness of his sources, whether from Pinkerton or others, so he gives the impression of being unbiased. Still, my impression is that information about the Lincoln plot is based primarily on Pinkerton's own accounts -- and the author readily admits that Pinkerton wrote several self-promoting books and articles. I say it is "my impression" because there are no footnotes (nor notes section) to indicate sources. Mr. Stashower does mention the source of some of his information within the text, but knowing I could not tie a specific fact or opinion to a specific reference eroded much of my confidence in his assertions.

Published in 2013 by Minotaur Books, the volume contains 354 pages, a select bibliography, and an index. Amazon has the hard cover available for \$16.08 and the Kindle electronic version for \$9.99. Barnes and Noble has the hardcover for \$16.06 and the Nook version for \$12.99. Mentor Public Library has two copies and one copy on CD. The ClevNet System has 42 hard covers, plus six large print books, and twelve audio CDs.