



THE COURIER



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table



Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table Summer Picnic

The Pine Lake Trout Club

17021 Chillicothe Road, Chagrin Falls, Ohio

Sunday August 22nd, 2010 Time: 2pm--dusk

Reservations required Please call Steve Abbey

Phone 440 255 8375 e-Mail: abbeysr@yahoo.com

The **NEOCWRT** will gather on Sunday, August 22nd to celebrate the summer of 2010 with an afternoon picnic style lunch at the **Pine Lake Trout Club** located at 17021 Chillicothe Road in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Pine Lake is an idyllic setting with cooling waters and soft breezes on a warm summer's day. Note: This is a **BYOB** (bring your own beverage) event. So if single malt scotch is your elixir, you'll have to bring it and probably share it! Please call Steve Abbey to reserve your table on the screened porch of the lodge. Pine Lake is located just off Chillicothe Road (Rt. 306), ¼ mile south of East Washington Street in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Check out their web site at www.pinelaketrouclub.com and find driving directions and general information about the Pine Lake Trout Club.



Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing Awarded the Medal of Honor

Margaret Zerwekh, a 90 year old historian from Delafield, Wisconsin has spent the last 23 years trying to correct an injustice. The Medal of Honor was established during the American Civil War but most recipients had to be living. The Medal of Honor was seldom awarded posthumously until the twentieth century. Deceased soldiers and sailors from the Civil War that displayed uncommon valor were usually not eligible for their nation's highest honor until now.

The Secretary of the Army John M. McHugh has finally authorized that First Lieutenant Alonzo Hereford Cushing be awarded the Medal of Honor. In 1987 Margaret Zerwekh began writing letters to Congressmen, Senators and Presidents in an effort to finally win recognition for Lt. Cushing. Senator Russ Feingold submitted a request for the Medal of Honor for Alonzo Cushing back in 2002. The U. S. Army finally approved of Senator Feingold's application for honor after eight years of research into Lt. Cushing actions at the Battle of Gettysburg, July 3rd 1863.



Alonzo Hereford Cushing was born January 19, 1841 in Delafield, Wisconsin. He was the son of Dr. Milton and Mary Barker Cushing. The Cushing family moved to Fredonia, New York in 1850 after the death of Dr. Cushing. Alonzo Cushing attended the Fredonia Academy and was admitted to West Point when he was just sixteen years old. Cushing graduated in the Class of 1861 along with George Armstrong Custer, Patrick O'rouke and Samuel Ferris. He was commissioned a second lieutenant and assigned to the 4th U.S. Field Artillery. He fought at First Bull Run, The Peninsula Campaign, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville before being positioned near the center of the Union line on Cemetery Ridge during the Battle of Gettysburg.

On July 1, 1863, Alonzo Cushing assisted General Hancock in placing the Union line along Cemetery Ridge. Lt. Cushing's Battery A helped repulse the Confederate attack on July 2nd, 1863. On July 3rd, Cushing's Battery was in position near the "Angle" at the center of the Federal line. Despite being wounded in his right shoulder and a severe shrapnel wound to his groin and abdomen, he refused to be removed from the battlefield.



Cushing ordered his Battery A forward in an effort to stop the Confederate penetration at the most intense moments of Pickett's Charge. Battery A continued to fire into the attacking Rebel line until Lieutenant Cushing was shot in the face and died instantly. Alonzo Cushing's body was entombed at West Point where he has served as a beacon of courage to the thousands of young officers that have graduated from the Academy. It took the undying courage and persistent work of one Margaret Zerwekh to finally give

1st Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing the recognition he deserved. Alonzo Cushing would not give up his fight and neither did Margaret Zerwekh.

Photographs and references:

Alonzo Cushing photograph from the Wisconsin Historical Society

Margaret Zerwekh photograph from the June 11, 2010 New York Times

Civil War Times, April 2010 edition

New York Times June 11, 2010" Winning a Battle to Honor a Civil War Hero"

CIVIL WAR MINUTES by Franco M. Sperrazzo V.P./ Events Coordinator

After entertaining members of the Mahoning Valley Civil War Round Table on Monday night, **Ethan Rafuse** arrived 10:00 am at Dino’s Restaurant on Tuesday, May 11th, thanks to our own generous trooper **Secretary George Grim**. **George** and **Ethan** were greeted by President **Terry Reynolds** and **Franco** on a cool rainy morning. We visited the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, where **Ethan** respectfully thanked us for indulging him.

We had lunch at Yours Truly in Mentor with **Norty London** joining us. Mid afternoon was spent at the James A. Garfield Home at Lawnfield. National Park Ranger **Scott Longert** performed admirably as our well informed tour guide. After a down pour, we arrived at **Bob Boucher’s** house to review plans for the evening affair. Forty-two more of our members and quests, like new comer **Bill Koeckert** a WWII veteran and friend of **Frank Moore**, welcomed **Ethan** to our group.



Above photograph: Franco, Scott, Ethan Rafuse, Garfield, Norty, Terry and Arlan



London, Ethan Refuse, Franco Sperrazzo and John Sandy

When I read the biography of **Ethan Rafuse**, I imagined him to be a middle aged man in his 60’s rather than actually short of 42 years old. He was articulate, engaging and so impressed that **Les West** commented “ You’re the best speaker we have ever had!” We will not mention this to one of his and our heroes **Edwin C. Bearss**. He brought two of his books Robert E. Lee: The Fall of the Confederacy 1863-1865 and George Gordon Meade and the War in the East. Special thanks to program director and our guest **Gordy Morgan** from Youngstown and our own **Joe Tirpak** for coordinating **Mr. Rafuse’s** travel itinerary. **Ethan** indicated he Would love to visit Cleveland again with his wife whether LeBron is here or not. *Left Photograph : Gordy Morgan, Norty*

nty six members and guests joined noted **Cleveland Ohio Sacred Architecture Historian Tim Barrett** on a tour of some of the most famous and historic churches in Northeast Ohio as part of our **Spring Field Trip**.. Our tour began at St. Coleman Catholic Church on West 65th Street. **St Coleman’s** was built by Irish immigrants before World War I, and is adorned with imported Italian marble altars that were hand carved by Irish craftsmen in Ireland. Note: many Cleveland area Irish celebrate St. Patrick’s Day by first attending Mass at St. Coleman. Tim Barrett presented not only the history of the church but also interwove its importance in the history of the Western Reserve.



Spring Field Trip group photograph. Guess who is missing from our group shot?.

We next traveled to **St Stephen’s** Catholic Church at West 54th Street to view hand carved black walnut statues and altars. St. Stephen’s celebrated their 140th anniversary on Sunday, May 16, 2010, therefore our visit was at a very important occasion. We then visited **The Pilgrim Congregational United church of Christ** on West 14th Street in the Tremont District. Pilgrim Congregational was a church that built with granite more than 100 years ago but it continues to serve the spiritual and social needs of its members. Pilgrim Congregational has Tiffany glass windows that our timeless in their beauty. At 1:20 pm our tour group walked across the street to enjoy a hearty lunch at Grumpy’s Café. Everyone had a great time and especially enjoyed their informative and entertaining tour with Tim Barrett.

Memorial Day-Willoughby Cemetery: On May 31st, **Terry Reynolds, Joe Tirpak, Ted Karle, Bill Meissner, Carl, Janet, Dominic Dodaro, and Franco & Cyndy Sperrazzo** were all present for our 8th annual memorial celebration and wreath presentation. This is a meaningful ceremony that we're proud to participate in annually.



June 8th Executive Committee Meeting: **Mike Sears** and **Tom Horvath** have done a wonderful job constructing our new Website. As noted on a June 21st email, you can peruse past newsletters dating back to January 20, 2008. Explore our club history and other attractions like field trips and more by searching the web at neocwrt.org, and enter our password. If you have some noteworthy information to share, contact **Mike** and **Tom** as they will continue to maintain our legacy and history as it evolves.

Annual Picnic By now most of our members know that our 6th annual picnic will not be at **Arlyn's** and **Pat Byrne's** farm in Middlefield this summer. So scratch July 11th from your calendar. The 51st Ohio Volunteer Infantry had a previous commitment scheduled out of town. Since the cancellation the committee has explored other options. **Ted, Franco** and **Arlan** have visited alternate facilities from Chardon to Chester Township and have landed a gem in the Chagrin Falls area. pinelaketrouclub.com is located on route 306 Chillicothe Road one quarter mile east of Washington Blvd. and west of Tanglewood Country Club near Route 422. Stay tuned for a separate flyer with more specific details and a map.

The picnic is planned for Sunday, August 22nd, around 2pm and continue until dusk. It is a splendid wooded facility typical of the Adirondack area of New York. **London, JET,** and **Karle** have attended affairs there. Our own **John Hattendorf** is a member. The affair will be catered and adult members and guests are welcomed. Stay tuned for pricing and arrangements. Any questions call **Ted** (440) 255-9375 or email at theokarle@aol.com or **Franco** (440) 567-2414 or email francomichael2414@yahoo.com

W.R.H.S - We have agreed to help co-sponsor a Civil War 5 Year Exhibit that will commence in March 2011. This will coincide with the 150th Sesquicentennial of the start of the war. I arranged a meeting on June 8th with **Janice Ziegler**, vice president for education of public programs, and **Edward J. Pershey, Ph.D.** director of exhibits and museum services. Much was accomplished with the help of **Tirpak, London, Karle** and **Byrne** present. We will offer our membership speaker programs the likes of **Bob Boucher, Dan Cudnick, Phillip Price, Bob Stabile** and **Brian Kowell** to name a few.

For the next five years we will send a donation to support WRHS annual fundraising campaign goals in addition to our organizational membership commitment. On June 18th they surpassed their 2010 projection of \$242,025. by \$5,000. With more pledges like ours still arriving they are close to completely paying off their \$3.5 million dollar debt. This will allow this historical treasure to obtain more artifacts and operate efficiently for years to come.

Hale Farm and Village Civil War Re-enactment: will be August 14&15 from 10:00 –5:00 pm. A new picnic area pavilion has been erected. Anyone interested in attending can contact **Franco** for more details and summer programs.

James A. Garfield National Historic Site: will present special events and programs throughout 2010. One noteworthy event is a Civil War encampment July 31 and August 1st from 10:00 am – 4:30pm. Call **Scott Longert** (440) 255- 8722 or www.nps.gov/jaga

Fall Field Trip: September 23-24-25 to revisit and explore new areas of the Shenandoah Valley. Please submit your \$100 deposit to **Mike Sears.** **Norty** will keep us informed.

The Courier is the monthly news letter of the Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table

John Sandy Editor

Staff writers: Franco Sperrazzo

Tom Horvath

Norton London

Carl Dodaro

Joe Tirpak

NEOCWRT EARLY HISTORY

Motto: **“Quality, Education, and Fellowship in all our Endeavors!”**

A historic ninety-minute meeting took place starting at noon sharp on December 12, 1997 at the Dock Restaurant in Wickliffe, Ohio. The purpose of this meeting was to determine if the group assembled was interested in becoming founders of a new Civil War Round Table? The interest and desire was unanimous!

Six of the seven founders were in attendance that afternoon. Ernie Safran could not attend due to an illness in the family.

“The Founding Seven” were:

Robert E. Battisti, Sr.	Novelty, OH	(deceased)
Robert R. Baucher	Mentor, OH	
Robert N. Bayless	Lyndhurst, OH	(relocated)
Norton London	Cleveland Hts., OH	
Earnest Safran	Novelty, OH	(resigned)
Joseph E. Tirpak	Mentor, OH	
Frank A Yannucci	Youngstown, OH	

The following items were discussed and/or resolved at the initial meeting:

- **Official Name of group:** Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table
- **Charter Member:** Agreed that new members who joined the NEOCWRT starting January 1, 1998 through December 31, 1998 would be recorded with a special designation as “*Charter Member*”.
- **Constitution:** Bob Baucher and Bob Bayless volunteered to draft a Constitution for our next meeting scheduled for January 15, 1998. This follow-up meeting was designated a business meeting to continue the planning and launch of our new Round Table scheduled for April 14, 1998. The Constitution was approved pending minor modifications.

Officers and Executive Committee:

Joe Tirpak was selected to serve as the first President of the new group. Each of the Founders was to serve as President for one year. The rotation for President was in order of joining the Cleveland Round Table. Each Founder was either a prior or current member. The seven founders were also members of the Executive Committee.

Decisions or assignments agreed upon in the historic first meeting:

- To determine Round Table legal requirements if any? Nerty London
- 1st Speaker at the April 14, 1998 kick-off meeting: Bob Baucher
- Vice President and Secretary, Bob Battisti
- Vice President and Treasurer, Bob Bayless
- Vice President, Chief Photographer, & Podium Builder: Ernie Safran
- Vice President and Legendary Quote maker: Frank Yannucci
- Art Work and Logo: Bob and Natalie Bayless
- Editor: THE COURIER, Bob Bayless
- Dues: Not determined; however each Founder contributed \$10.00. The Treasury stood at \$70.00
- To design and develop a Membership Application: Joe Tirpak

Memorable Moments



Founders with Ed Bearss



Franco & Bob – Baseball in CW



Club meets at Perkins



Monument Dedication

Moving Forward

- Each of us had our respective assignments and we eagerly looked forward to the challenge of making this dream become a reality. The first meeting of potential new members was held on the second Tuesday of April 1998. Bob Baucher spoke on: “The Gathering Storm.” The meeting included fifteen members and guests and was deemed a great success. Our first Fall Field Trip was to Shiloh. Stacy Allen, Chief Historian of the Shiloh Battlefield served as our official Tour Guide. Norty London served as our “Supreme Field Commander”. Our new battle cry was born out of thirst on this field trip. Founder, Frank Yannucci uttered his famous quote, which lives in infamy:
“Salad! The hell with salad, bring us some BEER!”

In December of 1998 we closed our first year with a real coup and national treasure, Edwin Cole Bearss as our guest speaker. His presentation: *“The High-water Mark of the Confederacy: July 2, 1863”*

Membership at year-end stood at twenty-three total members. This included the seven Founders and the sixteen Charter Members. The Founders were honored with a beautifully framed plaque presented by Ed Bearss. Our sincere thanks to Bob and Natalie Bayless for this very meaningful gift.

Yes! We had a dream. The dream is now a reality. For this we are truly grateful.

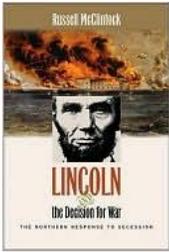
Our goal was simple: “To become the Best Little Round Table in the Country”

We truly believe we have succeeded.

The Founders

Lincoln and the Decision for War by Russell McClintock

Book Review by Tom Horvath



We are well aware that South Carolina seceded from the Union on December 20, 1860 and that on April 12, 1861, the Confederate States fired on Fort Sumter and the Civil War began. But what happened between those two dates? Would it have been possible to come to some agreement that would have avoided war and either brought the seven states back into the Union or led to a peaceful separation? Many Northerners believed in one or both of those possibilities. Many believed that if Civil War occurred, the Union could never be brought together again – not at the point of a sword -- so that any concession would be preferable to Civil War. There were also hard-liners who believed that any concession to the South would effectively emasculate the Federal government to the point that there would be no Union. In essence, a legally elected majority would be bowing to the will of a recalcitrant minority.

Mr. McClintock examines the various Northern responses to South Carolina's secession – among political leaders, newspaper editors, and the public. He analyzes the breadth of response and, as best can be determined, the distribution of feelings. He attempts to track these feelings as they changed over the space of those few months.

There is no in-depth analysis of Southern feeling. The subtitle of this volume is *The Northern Response to Secession*, and, given Lincoln's lack of overt action during the first part of this period, it is a more appropriate title.

The book begins rather dryly. The author begins by proposing that much of what happened revolved around political parties; that people looked upon secession as a political problem to be handled by their Federal and state governments through the parties. Once he gets beyond that argument and the early stages of the story, the story picks up speed and interest. Stephen Douglas and William Seward both take politically risky steps to find a peaceful solution. Lincoln begins to take a more active role and outside events occur more quickly. Despite knowing the overall outcome, the more detailed actions and reactions are new material, and it becomes compelling reading.

Mr. McClintock keeps his approach unbiased, though I thought I detected a slight leaning toward the South. Interestingly enough, he treats President Buchanan, not necessarily kindly, but with a little more understanding than most authors.

Overall, I found this to be a very good book with a large amount of new information. It takes some persistence to get through the early goings but is worth the effort. Mr. McClintock's style is generally easy to read, though occasionally his unusual placement of negatives had me re-reading some sentences.

Published in 2008 by the University of North Carolina Press, the book contains 388 pages, a notes section, bibliography, and index. Barnes and Noble has the hard cover available for \$28.00 and a paperback version for \$13.50. Amazon has the hardcover available for \$23.10. The Mentor Library does not own a copy, but their association of libraries (Search Ohio) has 6, while the CleveNet System has 8 copies with two more on order.

The Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table Web Site is now a reality.

See it at: neocwrt.org

Managed and produced by Mike Sears and Tom Horvath



WHY THE VALLEY

The location and geography of the Shenandoah Valley gave it significant military importance during the Civil War. Its southwest to northeast direction provided for the Confederacy an ideal "Avenue of Invasion." Southern armies marching northeast in the Valley drew closer to the Federal capital at Washington D.C., while their Union counterparts, advancing southwest marched away from the Confederate capital in Richmond. Little wonder that Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson said: "I have only to say this – that if this Valley is lost, Virginia is lost."

The Valley is bordered on the east by the Blue Ridge Mountains and on the west by the Alleghenies. Between Harrisonburg and Strasburg, the Massanutten Mountain divides the countryside into two narrow valleys. At the time of the Civil War, the Valley also boasted one of the longest all-weather roads in North America-The Valley Turnpike. With a macadam surface constructed in the 1840s, this wide, graded roadway also proved essential for the rapid movement of large armies.

Early in the war, Jackson used the Valley to threaten Washington and the operations of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. A special Federal force, commanded by Gen. Nathaniel P. Banks, was dispatched to secure the area. Judiciously taking advantage of the natural terrain features of the Valley. Jackson executed his famous Valley Campaign of 1862, defeating Banks.



The Valley figured heavily in both major Confederate invasions of the North. Both invasions ended in failure: the first in September 1862 along Antietam Creek near the town of Sharpsburg, Maryland; the second in early July 1863 at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Following each of those two defeats, the Valley afforded Gen. Robert E. Lee's bloodied Confederates both a route of unimpeded withdrawal and an area to rest and recuperate.

By 1864, the Federal high command realized that control of the Valley was imperative. Gen. Franz Sigel, who was first given that assignment, met with miserable defeat at New Market May 14 1864, and was replaced by Gen. David Hunter. Hunter

experienced greater success until he came up against Jackson's old corps, now commanded by Gen. Jubal A. Early, at Lynchburg. Using the Valley as his "Avenue of Invasion", Early followed up his success by marching north into Maryland and eventually to the gates of the Federal capital.

Finally, Federal Gen. Ulysses S. Grant insisted that Gen. Phillip H. Sheridan be given command of a force large enough to defeat Early and destroy the Valley's ability to feed Lee's army besieged at Petersburg. Following a series of fierce battles, the Federal commander could finally boast that his objectives had been achieved. Once the Valley was secured, Washington D. C. was no longer seriously threatened, and the Union armies could be concentrated for the final push against Lee's **Petersburg defenders.** *Information is taken from: Virginia Civil War Trails – Shenandoah Valley – Avenue of Invasion*

The Northeast Ohio Civil War Round Table Fall 2010 Field Trip

Jackson's 1862 Shenandoah Valley Campaign and Sheridan's 1864 Valley Campaign

Thursday, Sept. 24th – Sunday, Sept. 26th \$100.00 deposit is required to reserve your room.

Send you deposit to: Mike Sears at : 5843 Marine Parkway, Mentor, Ohio 44060

Questions: Call Mike Sears at 440 339 0114