



October 2008  
Volume 15 Number 2

# The Battlefield

Newsletter of the Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

## October 16th Meeting

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## Meeting Site

### Town of DeWitt Community Room

148 Sanders Creek Parkway  
East Syracuse, New York

**Joe Card**

Presents

## Lincoln & Davis

Thursday, October 16, 2008  
7:00 PM

**Our 15th Year!**

Meetings are held at 7 PM on the third Thursday of the month from September through June and are free and open to the public.

It's been a few years since Joe Card addressed our Round Table. We're glad he's back. Joe is a founding member of the Binghamton Civil War Round Table, a retired history teacher and a 20 year plus attendee of the **Civil War Institute** at Gettysburg College. As a devoted student of Abraham Lincoln, Joe also attends the **Lincoln Forum** held each November in Gettysburg and the Lincoln Prize ceremony awarded by **The Lincoln and Soldiers Institute** each April in New York City.

This month Joe will apply his keen analytic skills to the lives and political careers of both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis with a focus on their abilities as commanders-in-chief. Joe will both amuse and educate us with his insights. This is a guarantee!

### The President's Corner

As you already know, this past month Courtney Tucker informed the Round Table about the soldiers from Onondaga County who fought in the Civil War. There were 28 in attendance that night of which a few were new faces for Courtney's interesting and informative presentation.

Since this past April when the Round Table moved to a larger facility, our membership has been increasing again. Our new place is large and airy with plenty of free parking which makes for a great attraction for seeking new members.

Jim Dromgoole reports that Viau Construction has *completed* the Sumner grave site repairs. Viau finished the repairs by bringing in new top soil and reseeded the area disturbed by the heavy equipment. The final bill has yet to be determined.

See you on the 16th,  
Bill Goodrich

### Ghosts Again In Syracuse

The famed Onondaga Historical Association Ghost Walk 2008 will again be seen and heard on Friday and Saturday, October 10 & 11 from 6-8:30 PM. Groups will leave the Atrium every 15 minutes for ghostly, ghastly and good humored stories of Clinton Square. During a 90 minute tour, you will learn of the escape of the "White Lady" fugitive, a New Year's Day Barbecue for 40,000 Syracuse residents and riots-wars-mass searches- butchers-and boats. Complimentary cider and donuts will be served at the end of the tour. Tickets are \$12 for non OHA members and \$10 for members. *High Spirits in Clinton Square* will be fun for the entire family. Call the OHA for more information. 315-428-1864 Congratulations to the OHA for again bringing back Syracuse's ghosts.

### Directions to Town of DeWitt Community Room

From 481N take Exit 5W to Kirkville Rd West. Merge onto Kirkville Rd and travel 1.2 miles. Turn right onto Kinne St and travel 0.7 miles. Turn right at Sanders Creek Parkway and travel 0.2 miles to 148 Sanders Creek Parkway, the site of the East Syracuse Fire Department and the Town of DeWitt Community Room.

## General Lee To New York City

The New York Historical Society in collaboration with the Virginia Historical Society has invited member Dick Crozier, aka General Robert E. Lee, to help kick-off a new 5- month exhibit titled *Grant and Lee in War and Peace* on October 17th at their 170 Central Park West location. According to NYHS CEO Dr. Louise Mirrer, the exhibit presents “the two men as the embodiments of the dilemmas of the American history - not only the legacy of slavery, secession and war, but also the rise of a powerful centralized government and the balance of military and civilian power.” The exhibit will have items from the society’s collections as well as private and public collections from around the country including the uniforms of Grant and Lee, maps, photographs, art, and documents such as Grant’s handwritten *Terms of Surrender*. You can visit the NYHS website at [www.nyhistory.org](http://www.nyhistory.org) for more details.

## Whose On Little Round Top?

Scott Pitzer is a staff writer for the Gettysburg Times. When on Friday, Sept. 4th his grandmother called him to say she had just had her picture taken at the Soldiers’ National Cemetery in Gettysburg with the President, Scott was skeptical. To Scott’s relief, his grandmother was correct.

The President and First Lady arrived at the Gettysburg Battlefield from nearby Camp David for an unpublicized visit along with Karl Rove, Education Secretary Margaret Spellings, former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, and Karen Hughes former undersecretary of state for public diplomacy and public affairs. They did not have to hire a guide. Waiting for them was Dr. Gabor Boritt, professor of history and director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College along with his son Jake, a documentary film maker.

The two-hour tour covered the three days of the battle including a stop on Little Round Top where Dr. Boritt talked about the General Hood’s Texas infantry. Visitors on LRT that day were delighted to see the President who shook hands and gave autographs. The group then visited the National Cemetery and the new Visitor Center where Bush was given a sneak preview of the restored Cyclorama painting.

Jake Boritt said his father gave the President a copy of his book, *The Gettysburg Gospel*, and a copy of a documentary Jake has produced about his father called *Budapest to Gettysburg*. Gabor has met the President before and characterized him as a history buff.

“Some people love him, some people hate him,” said Gabor, “but he is a hell of a nice guy.”

## January Jeopardy

After the Civil War, this Confederate general was offered a generalship by the Khedive of Egypt and the position of US Marshall by Grant. He declined both to enter the insurance business in Virginia.

Who was George Pickett?

## The Very Last Confederate Widow - Really!

Alberta Martin who died recently was thought to be the last Confederate widow until Maudie Hopkins’ story became known. Mrs. Hopkins died on August 19, 2008 at the age of 93. Her first husband whom she married in 1934 was William Cantrell of the 7th Virginia Mounted Infantry. When he was widowed in 1929 in his 80’s, he hired young Maudie Acklin to do house cleaning. Eventually he needed someone to cook and care for him. This led to his decision to marry Maudie who came from a large family with little means. Three years after they married, Cantrell died at the age of ninety in 1937. He had deeded Maudie his house and 200 acres in the Ozarks of Arkansas. She was widowed three more times and is survived by three children.

## C-Span: The Lincoln Bicentennial Network



The first Saturday of each month at 8 PM, C-Span will present programming on Abraham Lincoln to celebrate the upcoming Bicentennial. On Saturday, October 4th from 8 - 10 PM, Michael Beschloss, NBC’s presidential historian spoke on the character of Lincoln, author Joshua Shenk’s discussed Lincoln’s melancholy, and author James Swanson revealed the myths and facts of Lincoln’s assassination. So you won’t miss the next few month’s of Lincoln programming, mark your calendars on November 1st and December 6th - 8 PM. The specific themes are yet to be announced.

If you can access the Internet, do look at the information on [www.c-span.org/lincoln200years/](http://www.c-span.org/lincoln200years/) Here you can watch all of the past 1st Saturday Bicentennial presentations as well as the seven debates between Lincoln and Douglas either as videos or transcripts. Take a tour of the Lincoln Cottage shown on September 6th. Access Lincoln’s speeches, his pre-presidency years, Lincoln sites, and all national Bicentennial events. This is a site for Lincoln students of any age especially those students who miss the 1st Saturday of the month programming.

## Where Is This Obelisk?

This 351’ tall concrete monument (the 5th tallest in American) stands in the Jefferson Davis Historic Site in Fairview, Kentucky. The site is maintained by the Kentucky Department of Parks not the National Park Service.



Simon Buckner, a Confederate general, proposed the idea of a monument for Davis in 1907. Construction began in 1917 but ended due to the building material rationing in WW I. It was finished in 1924 at a cost of \$200,000. An elevator takes visitors to an observation tower at the top of the monument.

Joe Card tells the story of his driving through Kentucky and seeing this monument looming in the distance. Joe knew George Washington had been born in Virginia and wondered why a similar obelisk was in Kentucky. To his surprise and without looking for it, in fact not knowing it existed, he had found the Davis’ Historic Site.

## Thank You for Your Dues

Dues paid at the September meeting: Mike Carpenter, Dave Cuculich, Collyn Conrad and Mom, David Fedele family, Bill Goodwin, Diane Haller, Lamont Hahn, Ruth Hotaling, Ted Jones, Martin Joyce, Cheryl LaManche, Kevin Milcarek, Pat Stepanek, Elaine Tucker, M. Kent Russell, Kathy Ryan, Eleanor & James Tyler, Marcus & Kristy Lee Witt.

## BYO Cup, Please

### NY State Archivist Convicted

"I apologize to the people of the state of New York, especially to my colleagues, whose public trust I violated," Daniel Lorello said as he was led from Albany County Court in handcuffs last Thursday. Lorello, a 55-year-old former archives and record management specialist for the state Department of Education, was convicted of stealing New York artifacts and selling them on eBay. He was sentenced to two to six years in prison, paid \$129,500 in restitution and turned over his personal collection to the state.

Over 1600 items have been recovered, and the restitution will be used in part to repay people who bought and gave back some of the stolen items. Lorello admitted stealing since 1997. His personal collection with its number of photos and first-edition books worth about \$80,000 will be added to the state's collection and may actually expand the state's collection.

A security audit has been completed at the State Museum building which houses the state library and archives.

## Lee's Last Day From Huntingdonnews.net C. E. Johnson, Jr.

General Robert E. Lee died at his home on the campus of Washington College in Lexington, VA at 9:30 AM on October 12, 1870. Some historians believe his greatest gift to the South was to accept the presidency of the financially troubled Washington Collegenow Washington and Lee University.

Lee had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage on September 28, 1870. His doctor had hopes for his recovery and urged Lee to "make haste and get well. Traveller has been standing too long in his stable and needs exercise."

Cadets from Virginia Military Institute carried Lee's remains to Lee Chapel where it lay in state while Virginia recorded some of the worst flooding in history. Memorial gatherings were held throughout the South and as far as New York and Great Britain.

A VMI Cadet wrote in a letter home," The day following the funeral procession after marching all around town and through the institute grounds, formed around the college chapel and he was buried in the chapel under the floor of the basement. The procession was a very large one, a great many persons from a distance being here. Our brass band with muffled drums went ahead of the hearse playing the death march."

### Finished

Jim Dromgoole sends along this photograph showing the now level identification stone (foreground) of General Edwin V. Sumner. That stone plus Mrs. Sumner's had been below ground level due to the weakening of the burial vault below - now rebuilt.



## Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

### New Member/Renewal Form

Membership dues of the OCCWRT are:

Please Check one of the Following

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20.00 a year

\_\_\_\_\_ O.H.A. members \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Seniors and Students \$15.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family rate (2 or more) \$30.00

Dues may be paid at meetings or sent to:

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

ATTN: A. Scott Cauger Treasurer

216 Windebank Lane

Minos, NY 13116

Please find \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed in form of

Circle One:

Check    M.O.    Cash

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Please check if you prefer an emailed newsletter and can receive an Acrobat (pdf) file.

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

The Onondaga County Civil War Round Table was organized in 1994 and is now an incorporated non-profit educational organization. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month from September through June. The purpose of the OCCWRT is to stimulate and encourage interest in the American Civil War, to assist in community service in order to enhance the study and understanding of the Civil War, to provide educational and historical research of the period, and to promote historic preservation.

*Onondaga County*  
*Civil War Round Table PO Box 175 Tully, NY 13159-0175*