



May 2006
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The Battlefield

Newsletter of the Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

2005-06 OCCWRT Officers

Mimi Rudy, Co-President
315 677-9743
mimirudy@twcny.rr.com

Beth Greenfield, Co-President
315 363-0012
BGreenfield@oneidahealthcare.org

Sue Greenhagen, Vice President
315 684-3418
greenhsh@morrisville.edu

Dave Osborn, Treasurer
315 446-1715

Bill Goodwin, Secretary/Publicity
315 437-3887

Dick Crozier, Trustee
607 753-9803
dickcrozier@yahoo.com

Kevin Milcarek, Trustee
315 374-2218

Darothy DeAngelo, Program Chair
315 682-6312
darothy__@hotmail.com

Pat Stepanek, Newsletter Editor
315 696-5531
pstepane@ix.netcom.com

Meeting Site

May 18, 2006

7 PM

Eastwood Baptist Church
3212 James Street
Eastwood, NY

Fiasco at the Crater

Presented by
Charles Snyder

Directions: Route 690 East to Midler Ave
Exit 15. North on Midler to James St.
Right on James. Church will be two blocks
from Midler on the right.

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.

May 2006 Meeting Details

“A fascinating collection of strange actions” is Charles Snyder’s comment about his presentation, *Fiasco at the Crater*, which he will share with us at our May 18th meeting. He explains, “By June of 1864 both the Union and Confederate troops were getting weary of “trench warfare”. The circle around Petersburg kept getting larger and the success of an attack by either group less likely.”

“A group of members of the 48th PA Infantry, ex-miners, suggested digging a tunnel under the Confederate lines, setting off an explosion, and breaking through to Petersburg. The suggestion went through the chain of command and was accepted, but by that time digging had already begun. A month later an explosion took place with a force never seen before in warfare. What followed was complete chaos!”

Mr. Snyder is a graduate of Earlham College, with a MA from Syracuse University and additional work at Syracuse and Cornell Universities. Now retired, he taught social studies, was a secondary school principal and Assistant Prof. at SUNY Oswego and Wells College. He served as an Adjunct Professor for Mercer U. in their Elderhostel program and is now teaching for the U of SC in the continuing education program. He is a docent for the Discovery Museum on Hilton Head Island doing historic tours and nature walks on Pinkney Island. His summer home is in Aurora on Cayuga Lake.

He is a member and past president of the CWRT of Coastal Georgia and a member of the Low Country CWRT and serves on the program committee. The Low Country CWRT is one of the largest in the US having over 400 members.

Join us for a look into this Federal effort to overcome the Confederate defenses of Petersburg on July 30, 1864. The failure of the Battle of the Crater ended General Ambrose Burnside’s military career. He was given leave from Grant’s army, never recalled, and resigned on April 15, 1865.

With Thanks to Eileen Patch

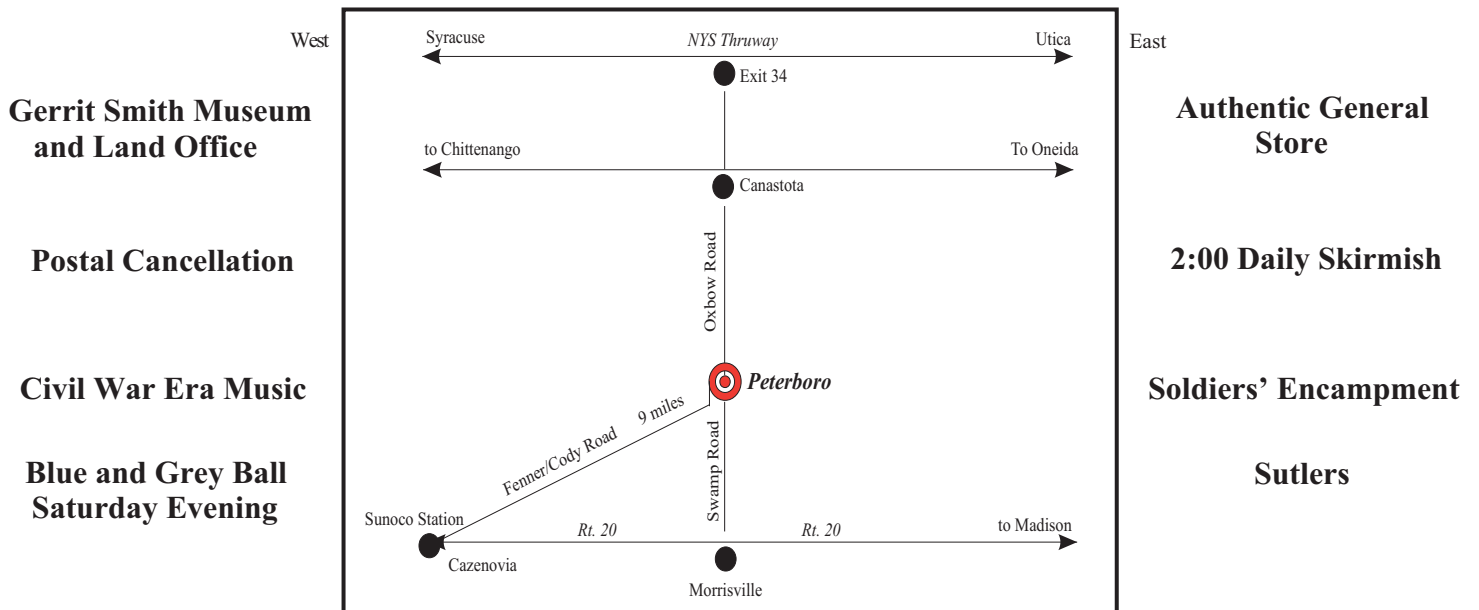
Members who attended the April meeting were introduced by Eileen Patch to her great grandmother, Sara Englis. Sara kept a clutch of letters from her son, George, who served in the 89th NYV during the Civil War. Eileen inherited those 57 letters, and from her study of them she has produced not only a book - *this from George* - but also an animated living history presentation of those letters as read and interpreted by Sara. Sara drew us into her era with a poignant narrative history of her family, her community, and her nation. Interspersed within this chronicle were incisive tidbits of military, social, and political history.

Eileen’s book may be purchased online at www.thisfromGeorge.com. We thank you, Eileen, for introducing us to Sara and George Englis.

14th Annual Civil War Weekend at Peterboro, New York

Saturday, June 10th 10-5

Sunday, June 11th 10-4



Once again it's time for the Civil War Era to return to Peterboro, New York during the second weekend in June 2006. The OCCWRT will have an information table manned by member volunteers each day. If you attend, please plan to spend some of your time helping out at the OCCWRT site.

Fighting Joe Hooker Pays Oswego a Call or Spin from Joe Hooker

From Richard Palmer, a reporter for the *Route 20 Pulse*, comes this gem:

Oswego Palladium, Tuesday, May 23, 1871

This morning Gen. Joseph arrived in this city on the Northern Transportation Company's steamer "Lawrence" on his way to the Magnesia Springs of Michigan. He was dressed in a plain grey-mixed business suit. His appearance is of good health, although he has recently suffered a slight attack of paralysis. His visit to Michigan is for the benefit of his health.

He was in excellent spirits this morning, and received several of our citizens on the boat, among whom we recognized some who had served under him in the days when "Fighting Joe" was in his glory. He talked freely of the war, its conduct and result, and seemed in full vigor of intellect.

In the course of conversation this morning he frankly expressed his opinion of President Grant. "He tried," said the General, "to get control of the Grand Army of the Republic, but we blocked him. It is my absolute conviction that were you to walk the length of Broadway, you could not meet a man less qualified for the Presidency than Grant. We of the army know him better than the people at large."

"When his Adjutant, Gen. Rawlins, was alive, the President seemed to be efficient and successful, but when Rawlins died, Grant's bottom fell out. He is now in his normal condition."

"What are his chances for re-election, General?" inquired one of the gentlemen.

General Hooker - "I am no politician; declined going to conventions, etc., in 1868, chiefly because I regarded Grant unfitted for the office of President; but from observation, I now think, candidly, and without prejudice, that Grant cannot carry a half dozen States. He is very cheap."

Grant was nominated without opposition at the 1872 Republican Convention and won an overwhelming 55.6% of the popular vote in the November election. So much for the political acumen of Joe Hooker!

Is She Serious?

Georgia's Superintendent of Schools, Kathy Cox, recently proposed a new high school history curriculum. Her proposal for U. S. history classes suggests that classes begin studying events after 1876, and world history classes study after the 1500's. Ms. Cox believes students are forced to learn too much history in one year and don't learn enough recent American and world history. Just imagine what would be eliminated from the high school curriculum: the U.S. Constitution, the founding fathers, slavery, the Civil War, Caesar, the Chinese dynasties, Greek civilization, the Renaissance. Perhaps Ms. Cox needs some R&R to regain her perspective.

President's Message

I recently judged a golden retriever match at FDR State Park near Yortowne Heights. There were a few bobbles getting started, but it went off successfully because of the hard working committee and the continued support of their club members. This seems to be true of all clubs and organizations across the country. A core group of five to ten people can plan and execute the club's agenda for the whole year. The OCCWRT is no exception. Thanks to Darothy DeAngelo, we have a great program lined up for each meeting. Thanks to Pat Stepanek, we have an interesting newsletter, Bill Goodwin makes sure our meetings are posted in the *Post Standard* every month. Nancy Graham got us a meeting location. The list goes on and on. However, we need to be even more successful in our endeavors. Please volunteer to man our table at the Peterboro Civil War Days on June 10 and 11th and the Oakwood Cemetery Day in July. We really need people to support our Adopt-a-Position on Culp's Hill in Gettysburg. We really need people to come up with fund raising ideas, help write grant letters for General Sumner's tomb in Oakwood. We really need YOU to support our club!

Sic Simper,
Beth Greenfield, Co-President 2004-2006

Annual Meeting, June 15, 2006

The Constitution of the OCCWRT states in Article VI that all officers and trustees shall be elected at the annual meeting. It further states that ten days public notice of the annual meeting shall be given. We're on top of things this year by giving our members a 35 day notice. The nominating committee, Beth Greenfield, Valerie Williams, and Richard Walker, proposes the following slate of officers and trustees for the 2006-07 meeting year that begins in September.

President: Jim Dromgoole
Vice President: Sue Greenhagen
Treasurer: Dave Osborn
Secretary: Bill Goodwin
Trustee: Dick Crosier
Trustee: Kevin Milcarek

Nominations may be made from the floor. The installation of the officers and trustees shall be at the conclusion of the annual meeting. This will be our last meeting of the 2005-2006 meeting year.

Once business is out of the way, the Silent Auction and Show and Tell will begin. We accept donations for the auction and eagerly anticipate member participation in Show and Tell. Tell us what you're reading, bring in an interesting CW artifact, entertain us with your CW vacation videos and photos, or tell us something we might not know about the CW. Ted Jones, this is the time for your Stonewall story! Then we are free to begin our own CW explorations for July and August. Tromping over a Civil War battlefield is always a fine summer activity.

Antietam: An Economic Engine

The Hagerstown *Herald-Mail* recently reported on the economic impact of the Antietam National Battlefield on Washington County, Maryland. According to Antietam Superintendent John Howard addressing a business breakfast, 297,348 people visited Antietam and spent about \$10.8 million in the community, an average of about \$55 per person per day. Antietam tourism creates about 300 full-time jobs as well. A national park superintendent talking about business? Howard said, "That's my goal. I want tourists here. I want them to spend their money here because I work here." He concluded, "Ladies and gentlemen, if you succeed, I succeed." Beyond its history and beauty, Antietam National Battlefield is "an economic engine" for Washington County.

Welcome

We welcome two new members to the OCCWRT. Steve Fisher of Syracuse and Sue Boardman of Gettysburg. Steve is a parole officer and new to the Syracuse area. Sue is a Licensed Battlefield Guide who knows every blade of grass on Culp's Hill.

Last Chance to Buy a Chance

The drawing for the framed portrait of General Sumner will be held during our June meeting. That means you have just two meetings left to buy your chance. General Sumner looks forward to finally having a home.

New Gettysburg Film

Inecom Entertainment Co., a Pittsburgh-based independent-film production company, has just released a documentary titled *Horses of Gettysburg*. The film focuses on the role of the 72,000 horses and mules in the battle. Ron Maxwell, the director of *Gettysburg* and *Gods and Generals* narrates the 116 - minute documentary. This is the fourth film in the Civil War Minutes series by Inecom.

General George Greene Biography

For those members who remember the informal review of this biography discussed at last June's Show and Tell, you will enjoy the irony inherent in this press release to the Civil War News, May 2006:

Norwich, VT - A descendant of Brig. Gen. George Sears Greene, commander of the 60th New York Volunteer Regiment, recently gave a copy of the first Greene biography to Norwich University.

LTC John Greene, USAR, (Ret), from Waterloo, Belgium, was joined by his son, LTC Ian Greene, USA Fort Shafter, Hawaii, a Norwich graduate, when he gave a copy of David W. Palmer's *The Forgotten Hero of Gettysburg* to the university library. General Greene was John Greene's great-great-grandfather.

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

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table
New Membership/Renewal Form

Membership dues of the OCCWRT are:

Please Check one of the Following

- ____ \$20.00 a year
____ O.H.A. members \$5.00
____ 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: Dave Osborn, Treasurer
2 Thistlewood Lane
Fayetteville, NY 13066

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.