May 20th Meeting

David L. Callihan joins us this month to present the results of his quest to visit and photograph the graves of all the Civil War Generals, both Union and Confederate as well as other notables. To date he has been to the grave sites of 996 of the 1008 full rank generals, 1347 of the 1400 Union Brevet generals, 13 of Lincoln’s Cabinet officers, and 12 of Jefferson Davis’ 15 Cabinet officers. David resides in Dryden, NY (when he’s not traveling) where he continues to study and write about the Civil War. His first book, *They Did Their Work Bravely: Civil War Generals Buried in Pennsylvania*, was published in 2004. His second book, *Lest We Forget: The Grave Site of the Union Civil War Generals Buried in the United States*, was published in 2007. He has had ten articles published in the prestigious and scholarly *Gettysburg Magazine*, the most recent on Col. Paul Joseph Revere.

David lived in the vicinity of Gettysburg for more than twenty years before coming the Dryden. This gave him many opportunities to visit and study the battlefield, as well as work as a licensed battlefield guide. He has visited all the major Civil War Battlefields numerous times and has collected over 2000 books on the conflict. I guess he is running out of shelf space as we are.

Meeting Site: Town of DeWitt Community Room
148 Sanders Creek Parkway, East Syracuse, NY
Thursday, May 20, 2010 7 PM
David L. Callihan presents Grave Matters

June 10th Meeting

Patrick Schroeder, historian of Appomattox Court House National Park, again joins us to speak about the history of the colorful Zouave regiments in the Civil War. Because Patrick was available only on June 10th, we have moved our meeting to one week earlier than normal, the second Thursday in June. There will be no newsletter in June because of the earlier than normal meeting date. Please note this on your calendars.

From President Bill Goodwin

The board decided at our recent meeting that the Round Table should run programs this summer, for the months of July and August. We hope to get a greater response from the membership than we usually get in the winter months of January and February. We do hope what we have planned will bring forth more members and possibly a few new members.

If you haven’t been to a meeting of the Round Table recently, see the list beginning on page 2 of upcoming programs we are offering starting with the July 15th meeting.

Directions to the 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.*
July 15: Lance Ingmire, President of the Friends of Grant’s Cottage, will discuss Lincoln’s Funeral and Grant’s Cottage and his family’s connection to the events of July 23 - Aug 4, 1885 at the cottage.

August 19: Movie and Popcorn night, The Battle of Franklin

Sept 16: David Krutz, The Civil War Soldier’s Life

Oct 21: Robert Richter, 114th NY Volunteer Infantry

Nov. 18: Will Hutchison, Personal Security for A. Lincoln

Slate of Officers for 2010-2011

The nominating committee, consisting of Darothy DeAngelo, Ruth Hotaling and Sue Greenhagen, has contacted the following members of OCCWRT to ask if they would accept the nomination to the various offices. All have accepted.

President: A. Scott Cauger
V. President: Elaine Tucker
Secretary: Lisa Bradley
Treasurer: David Osborn
Trustee: Kathy Ryan
Trustee: Mike Carpenter

The slate will be read at the May general meeting. The Election of Officers will take place at the annual meeting on June 10th. All members in good standing are eligible to vote. Nominations from the floor will also be accepted on June 10th.

June 12th & 13th

Peterboro Civil War Weekend

The 18th annual Civil War Weekend encampment and living history event is scheduled for the weekend of June 12th and 13th in Peterboro, NY. Peterboro is the site of the Gerrit Smith Estate National Historic Landmark. Gerrit Smith, abolitionist and social reformer, was a lifelong resident Peterboro. The village was also the site of the inaugural meeting of the NYS Anti-slavery Society in 1835 and a major destination of the Underground Railroad. This small village is also the site of the National Abolition Hall of Fame and Museum and the home to suffragette and dress reform advocate Elizabeth Smith Miller. A lot of things to do during this annual event. Plenty of activities for everyone.

OCCWRT Members at Grant’s Cottage

A dozen Round Table members traveled to Grant’s Cottage on Mt. McGregor in Wilton, NY (about 10 miles north of Saratoga) early on Saturday morning, May 1, to volunteer their services along with volunteers of the Friends of Grant’s Cottage to rake, prune, and mow the grounds of the cottage for its May 29th opening. The Friends provided donuts and coffee upon our arrival and hotdogs and hamburgs after a few hours of serious outdoor chores. We were invited into the cottage for a tour of the main floor where General Grant spent the last 6 weeks of his life while he finished his memoirs to provide income for his family after his death. He died there on July 23, 1885 at 8:08 AM. In the Victorian tradition, the clock in his room was stopped by his son and has not moved since. In fact, not much has changed since Grant’s death. The funeral flowers remain in the house along with a bottle of cocaine water used to ease Grant’s pain from throat cancer. The artifacts make history come alive.

Each year the Friends of the Ulysses S. Grant Cottage have the responsibility to raise the funds which operate the Cottage. Their mission is to keep the cottage open so visitors can learn the story of a man who was not only a hero in time of war, but also in the struggle to provide for his family. Consider becoming a Friend of the Grant Cottage. More information is on the website: www.grantcottage.org

Effort in Congress to Bump US Grant

Just as folks in southern Ohio near General Grant’s birthplace were celebrating his 188th birthday with a 21-gun salute this past April 27th, buglers were sounding the charge and a battle cry could be heard nationwide. “Don’t mess with Grant.”

What’s the fuss about? Get this. Rep. Patrick McHenry, R-North Carolina, and 17 co-sponsors have introduced a bill to put Ronald Reagan on the $50 bill replacing US Grant. Why? McHenry feels Reagan renewed American self-confidence, beat the Soviets and transformed American political and economic thinking. “Every generation needs its own heroes, “ Mc Henry said. The backers’ goal is to have the bill passed in time for the 100th anniversary of Reagan’s birth next Feb 6th. Let’s of luck Mr. McHenry!

Brooks Simpson, an Arizona State University history professor who writes extensively about Grant, suspects part of the proposal “is a Southern thing.” Grant has been an anathema to some in the South. As a general, he was dubbed “the Butcher” and won ugly, with sieges, property destruction and staggeringly high casualties on both sides. As president, he forcefully pressed Reconstruction, and his presidency was marred by corruption.

“There has been a recent revival in interest and a re-evaluation of Grant as president.” said Simpson. He said some historians now put the criticisms of Grant in a broader context - other administrations of the era were dogged by corruption; as a general, Grant succeeded where other failed in preserving the Union; and as president, he championed civil rights.

Sean Wilentz, a Princeton history professor who wrote a book on the Reagan era, wrote in a recent NY Times op-ed piece that while Reagan deserves posterity’s honor, taking Grant off the bill “would dishonor the nation’s bedrock principles of union, freedom, and equality- and damage its historical identity.”

Joan Waugh, a professor of history at UCLA, and the author of U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth recently wrote: “...an appreciation of Grant could come only with the recognition that he was both the general who saved the Union and the president who made sure it stayed together. Rather than shunting Grant aside, Republicans should not only unite to keep him on the $50 bill but work to rekindle awareness of his stellar legacy.”

Let’s hope the old general has one more hard-won victory left.
2010 Summer Sundays in the Cemetery

Here is the Sunday summer schedule for the guided walking tours of historic Oakwood Cemetery. Tours begin at 2:00 PM - weather permitting.

May 23:  From the Ground Up  Dr. Donald Leopold, professor at SUNY ESF, will lead us on a tour that will cover native and non-native trees, shrubs, herbaceous species of Oakwood Cemetery. He will point out those of special interest and those that are generally less known, but are excellent choices for central New York landscapes.

June 27:  Doctors, Dentists, and Quacks  Darothy DeAngelo will lead a tour introducing a few of the medical and dental personalities of Syracuse, as well as a couple of gentlemen of dubious ethics.

July 25:  Painters, Sculptors, and other Artsy Folks  Steven Kern, Executive Director of the Everson Museum, will direct us to the gravesites of a number of Syracuse’s most artistically talented people.

August 15:  Murder, Mystery and Mayhem  Newspaperman Judson Brewster, portrayed by living historian Sue Greenhagen, will tell all the news that’s fit to print (and then some) on a handful of the seamier characters in Oakwood Cemetery. Barbara Rivette will be on hand at 1:45 PM to sign her new book, Oakwood: A Special Place.

Sept. 19  Signs, Symbols and Sayings: The Iconography of Death  Walk with Darothy DeAngelo and Sue Greenhagen as they point out some of the most interesting features on individual monuments.

Tours begin at the Chapel on the west side of the Cemetery.

Both Darothy DeAngelo and Sue Greenhagen representing the Historic Oakwood Cemetery Preservation Association were awarded the 2010 Upstate History Alliance Award of Merit this past April for their 2009 Cemetery tours. Congratulations.

2010 CW Reenactments and Living History Events


May 22-23:  2nd Annual Ashokan CW Days, Ashokan Center, Olivebridge, NY  www.ashokancivilwardays.com

July 3:  Mark Twain impersonator program and ice cream social, Grant’s Cottage, Wilton, NY

July 10-11:  Erie Canal Village CW Encampment, Rome, NY

July 16-18 CW Reenactment, Genesee Country Village, Mumford, NY


Remember: This is the newsletter for May & June

Onondaga County Civil War Round Table

New Member/Renewal Form

*Annual Membership dues of the OCCWRT

Please Check one of the Following

___ $20.00 a year individual
___ O.H.A. members $12.00 individual
___ Seniors and Students $16.00 individual
___ 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
Minoa, NY 13116

Please find $__________enclosed in form of
Circle One:
Check   M.O.    Cash

Date _____________________

* Dues will be pro-rated for new members who join at various times during the fiscal year.

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. 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.